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THE YIDDISH LANGUAGE IN NORTHERN POLAND:

ITS GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Marvin Irving Herzog

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## Dissertation Abstract

THE YIDDISH LANGUAGE IN NORTHERN POLAND: ITS GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Marvin I. Herzog

In the area under investigation, corresponding roughly to the Polish province Mazovia, Yiddish dialects in contact are coteritorial (and in close contact) with Slavic dialects in contact. By examining so heterogeneous an area of complex transitions the present work departs from the custom of descriptive linguistics which focuses attention upon relatively homogeneous linguistic entities. Linguistic and non-verbal cultural differences in the Yiddish language area are treated under a variety of headings and the geographic distribution of innovations is scrutinized as a reflection of the determinants of linguistic structure, communication facilities, and outside sources of stimulation.

The major Northeast-Southwest discontinuity in Yiddish dialects is reinforced both by linguistic and non-verbal data. In addition, an unusual correspondence between the two domains reoccurs systematically in a pattern of lexical and ethnographic extinction which is interpreted as a response of the traditional folk-society to pressures of urbanization.

Lexicon. Particular attention is focused upon the discontinuity of Slavic-origin vocabulary in Yiddish as compared with discontinuity in the coteritorial Slavic languages themselves. Such comparison permits an evaluation of the degree of constraint which coteritoriality imposes upon the distribution in one language (Yiddish) of elements originating in others (Slavic).

Grammar. Various aspects of grammatical variation are described--



the gender and case systems being analyzed in greatest detail. A relatively consistent relationship is defined between systemic variation and regional distribution.

Phonology. A comparison of the two major dialects--Central Yiddish and Northeastern Yiddish--permits the reconstruction of Proto-Eastern Yiddish. The divergence of these systems from a common source is easily explained in terms of a traditional Stammbaum model. It is evident, however, that the emergence of a new dialect (North-Central Yiddish), in the intervening transition area, can only be explained as a result of contact between the two. The origin of innovations in the transition area, and the consequence of contact among them, are ascertained.

Historical Synthesis. In order to explain the nature and location of linguistic discontinuities in the area, the migration and settlement history of its inhabitants is reconstructed. A consistent correlation between the historical and linguistic facts emerges. Furthermore, a direct comparison of the Yiddish data with known findings of Slavic dialectological research indicates that, though rough congruence of fragmentation lines in the two coterritorial societies is attributable to basic geographic factors, a good deal of non-congruence must be explained in terms of the separate histories of the coterritorial groups.

Structural Dialectology. In exploring the linguistic causes of change, the degree of relationship among phonological innovations is subjected to careful scrutiny. The relative chronology of their occurrence, and the stage in the development of each dialect at which contact took place, is established. The efficacy of structure is attested both by the degree of success in this endeavor and by demonstra-

ting the prevalence of relationships among changes in different parts of the language.

Nevertheless it is argued that the role of structure is not always decisive in determining change. It is shown, moreover, that in the area of dialect classification a purely synchronic classification leads to false conclusions concerning interdialectal relationships. It turns out that the phonemic concept is of little use either in tracing the process of dialect differentiation or in describing the reality of dialect relationships. These emerge only when the data are studied in their diachronic aspect.

In general, it appears from the study, that a pluralistic approach to language history is a safeguard against sterile, unrealistic schematizations.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## NOTE ON TRANSCRIPTION

In the following chapters we have employed a variety of transcription systems toward different ends. In each of them, stress is indicated in polysyllabic Yiddish words only when it is other than penultimate (syllables without vowels are included in the count; e.g. lip-n [lipm] 'lips', hit-l [hitl] 'cap'. In cited Polish forms, stress is invariably penultimate.

### 0.1 Bibliographic References

The titles of Yiddish works are cited in the so-called Yivo system where the digraph sh stands for I.P.A. [ʃ], zh for I.P.A. [ʒ], kh for the spirant [x]; y stands for the semivowel [j]; hence ay is [aj] and ey is [ej]. Titles of both Yiddish and Hebrew articles, when followed by a reference to the journal or collection, are given in English translation in square brackets. The titles of works published in the Cyrillic alphabet are transliterated in the system commonly followed by Slavic linguists.

### 0.2 The Text

A number of Yiddish words have gained some currency in English: Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year), shtetl (the East-European small town), etc. These words are cited in their accepted English spellings. Otherwise, all non-English words in the text are underlined and glossed in single quotes.



The transcription of Hebrew-Aramaic forms is based upon a transliteration system reflecting Sefardic pronunciation and in wide use in American Judaistic publications. Polish and German words are cited in their respective orthographies, and East Slavic words in the customary transliteration. In transcribing the underlined Yiddish words we have employed š for I.P.A. /ʃ/, ẕ for I.P.A. /z/, and c for I.P.A. /ts/.

The transliteration of Yiddish words reflects their morphological rather than their phonetic structure; e.g. hobn 'to have' rather than [hobm], šrajbt '(he) writes' rather than [šrajpt]. Similarly all underlined words reflect the phonology of Standard Yiddish except where the context makes it obvious that regional lexical variants are intended. Generally speaking, however, phonological variants are enclosed in square brackets.

### 0.3 Maps

Except in Chapter 5, regional phonological differences have been suppressed in order to simplify the presentation of our data. Even in the maps of Chapter 5, however, phonological variation is indicated only in the bracketed portion of the cited forms; other phonological differences are ignored (cf. also Chap. 5, fn. 5).

Legends accompanying the maps are of two kinds. Some contain a key to all the variants portrayed on the map (cf. Fig. 3:76); others contain only information not already given on the face of the map (cf. Figs. 3:8, 3:73). Some maps require no key at all (cf. Figs. 3:9, 3:11).

The overwhelming majority of our maps portray individual items. The balance, of a composite nature, may sometimes be structurally motivated. As a rule, however, a variety of items have been summarized in composite maps due to the congruence of their distributional patterns alone.

#### 0.4 Place-Names

Abbreviations identify our sample towns (Fig. 0:1).<sup>1</sup> We transcribe the corresponding place-names according to the normalizing tendency of Standard Yiddish. However, when the stressed vowel in local Yiddish tradition differs from that of Standard Yiddish, such divergence is indicated (in the keys to Figs. 0:1, 2:33, 2:35, and in Appendix II). Place-names with an established tradition in English are cited in their English spelling (e.g. Warsaw, Brest, Vilna, etc.), with the corresponding Yiddish name following the first occurrence of each.

---

<sup>1</sup>The political boundaries and the rivers, on this and nearly all subsequent maps, are identified in Fig. 6:11.

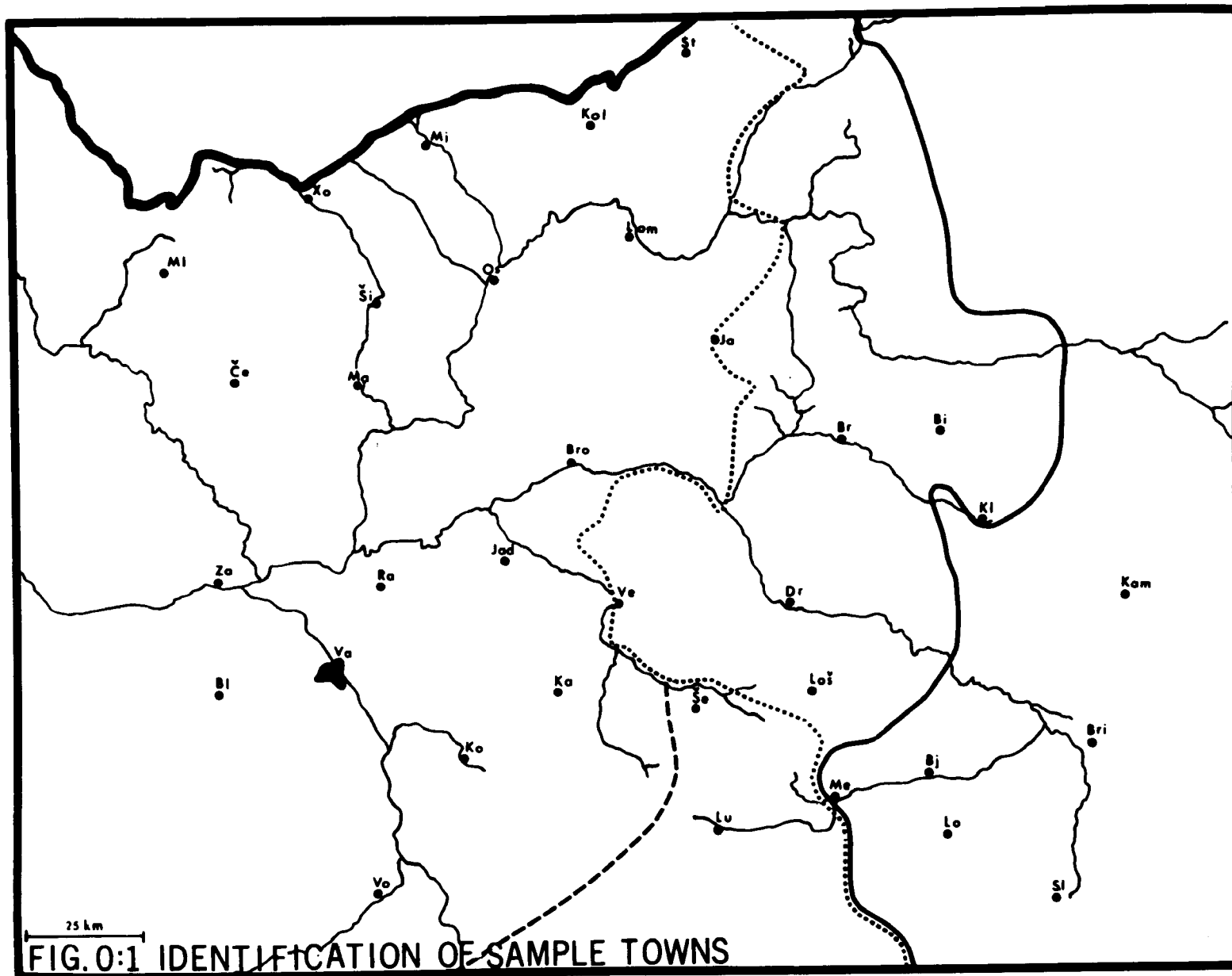


FIG. 0:1 IDENTIFICATION OF SAMPLE TOWNS

Key to Abbreviations in Fig. 0:1

<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>Grid No. - LCAAJ</u>	<u>Yiddish Name<sup>1</sup></u>
Bi	52237	Bilsk
Bj	52231	Bjale (Grojs-Bjale)
Bl	52202	Blojne
Br	52229	Brajnsk
Bri	52223	Brisk (-de-Lite)
Bro	52219	Brok
Če	52208	Čexenove
Dr	52225	Drohečín
Ja	52228	Jáblenke
Jad	52215	Jádeve
Ka	52213	Kalešín
Kam	52236	Kámenec-Litovsk
Kl	52235	Kleščél
Ko	52212	Kólebjel
Kol	53216	Kol'ne
Lo	51237	Lomás
Lom	53221	Lomze
Loš	52223	Lošic
Lu	51228	Lúkeve [likava]
Ma	52217	Mákeve
Me	51229	Mezrič
Mi	53215	Mišnec

---

<sup>1</sup>The Polish equivalents of these and other geographic references in the text are given in Appendix II.

<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>Grid. No. - LCAAJ</u>	<u>Yiddish Name</u>
ML	53202	MLave
Os	53212	Ostrelenke
Ra	52214	Radzemín
Še	52221	Šedlec
Ši	53211	Šilc
Sl	51238	Slávetič
St	53224	Stučín
Va	52211	Varše
Ve	52224	Véngreve
Vo	51217	Vorke [vurke]
Xo	53203	Xoržl
Za	52205	Zakrečín

### 0.5 Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are employed in the course of our discussion:

#### 0.51 Varieties of Yiddish

CY	Central Yiddish	SEY	Southeastern Yiddish
EY	Eastern Yiddish	Std.Yid.	Standard Yiddish
NCY	North-Central Yiddish	SY	Southern Yiddish
NEY	Northeastern Yiddish	WTcPY	West Transcarpathian Yiddish
P(... )Y	Proto (-....) Yiddish	WY	Western Yiddish

0.52 Other Languages

Belor.	Belorussian	Pol.	Polish
HA	Hebrew-Aramaic	Rus.	Russian
MHG	Middle High German	Ukr.	Ukrainian

0.53 Bibliographic References (cf. Bibliography pp. 383 ff.)

BKL	Brockhaus Konversations Lexicon
DABM	Dyalektalahičny atlas belaruskaj movy
LCAAJ	Language and Culture Atlas of Ashkenazic Jewry
MAGP	<del>Maly</del> atlas gwar polskich
RBS	Russko-belorusskij slovar'
SDF	Standard Dictionary of Folklore
SG	Słownik geograficzny <del>królestwa</del> polskiego
SJP	Słownik języka polskiego

0.54 Grammatical Terms

acc(us).	accusative	n.	neuter
adv.	adverb(ial)	nom.	nominative
c.	case	obl.	oblique
comp.	comparative	p.	past
dat.	dative	pf.	perfect
dim.	diminutive	pl.	plural
f(em).	feminine	p.p.	past participle
g.	gender	prep.	preposition
immin.	imminutive	pres.	present
imp.	imperative	v.i.	intransitive verb
inter.	intermediate	v.t.	transitive verb
m(asc).	masculine		

0.55 Miscellaneous

approxim.

approximately

obs.    obsolete

esp.

especially

s.v.    sub voce

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Aims of the Study

It has been known for at least half a century that the major isoglosses delimiting the traditionally defined dialects of Eastern Yiddish converge in Northern Poland.<sup>1</sup> The present study, as a descriptive work, is intended to fix the recent course of these isoglosses and to clarify, on a previously untried scale, the nature of the geographic discontinuity which the Yiddish language (along with certain associated elements of non-verbal Jewish culture) manifests in this area.<sup>2</sup> In its historical aspects, the present investigation attempts to account for the evolution of the observed discontinuity and for the location of some of the isoglosses. As a work in general linguistics, it seeks, on the basis of actual data, to evaluate certain claims advanced in recent years concerning the possibility and usefulness of reforming dialectology by the application of "structural" principles.

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<sup>1</sup> Eastern Yiddish (EY) occupies the territory roughly to the east of the pre-1939 border between Germany and Poland. The criteria for its delimitation from Western Yiddish (WY), as well as its further subclassification, will be described below (§1.3).

<sup>2</sup> In their southward divergence, some of the isoglosses run through Belorussia. Accordingly, the territory under investigation includes a small portion of western Belorussia as well. It is nevertheless convenient to use Northern Poland as a cover term for the entire area which, in fact, constituted the northeastern part of interbellum Poland.



The custom of descriptive linguistics as well as of Yiddish dialectology has been to focus attention upon relatively homogeneous linguistic entities. Our choice, instead, of a heterogeneous region of complex transitions, constitutes a sharp departure from this practice. It will be our first task to justify the opinion that a more traditional object of description, i.e. a homogeneous dialect area, would have failed to serve either the historical or theoretical goals of our work. Subsequently we will explain how the particular area was selected.

## 1.2 Transition Dialects and Their Implications

A linguist approaching the study of the Yiddish language cannot fail to be impressed by both the multiplicity of its geographical variants and the regularity of the differences between them. Lazar Șăineanu, in the introduction to his pioneering monograph on Yiddish (1889), understandably groped for at least a sketchy definition and delimitation of the Yiddish dialects despite the crudeness of his data.<sup>3</sup> One of the leitmotifs in Yiddish historical linguistics has, ever since, been an attempt to account for this orderly, far-reaching diversification of the language.

The first scholarly attempts at an explanation of Yiddish dialectal differentiation explored the possibilities of correlating the several varieties of Yiddish with previously delimited varieties

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<sup>3</sup>Though Șăineanu's classification is of little interest here, Gininger's attempt to salvage it (1954) has shown it to be of some merit.

of German. In view of the predominantly Germanic origin of the Yiddish vocabulary, this was perhaps the most natural course to follow.

Şăineanu himself, for example (op. cit.:93), drew attention to the distinctive Swabian features which the "Lithuanian" dialect possessed in addition to the supposedly basic Bavarian character of Yiddish.<sup>4</sup>

This approach, however, was soon frustrated by the work of Alfred Landau, who even objected to the use of the "dialect" as a unit of geographic or historical analysis, and urged instead that the distribution of each linguistic phenomenon be studied separately.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Other attempts at such correlations are summarized by Mieses (1915:115): "Während z.B. J. Babad der Ansicht ist, dass Yiddish [sic] sowohl grammatikalisch als lexikalisch dem bayerisch-österreichischen und dem alemannischen Dialekt nahesteht und bei demselben analoge Assimilations-Erscheinungen von Konsonanten, wie im Schwitzendeutsch nachzuweisen sind, tastet Şăineanu mit phonetischen Parallelen aus dem Schwäbischen, aus Oberplan in Böhmen, aus Pustertal in Tirol, aus Gottschee in Kärnten, pendelt Gerzon, mit viel Geschick auf die Lautverschiebung hinweisend, nach Ostmitteldeutschland (Thüringen, Obersachsen, Schlesien), legt Richard Löwe den Hauptnachdruck auf die bayerisch-österreichische Mundart, gewisse Konzessionen bloss dem schlesisch-thüringischen Spracheinfluss gewährend, geht Avé-Lallement bis nach Niederdeutschland, von wo er manche wichtige Elemente des Yiddish hervorgeholt sehen will. Heine hielt Jüdisch-Deutsch für die Landessprache von Frankfurt. J.M. Jost war der Ansicht, dass im Jüdisch-Deutschen nur Oberdeutsch vertreten ist und fast keine Spur vom Plattdeutschen sich in ihm befindet."

<sup>5</sup>"Die romanische Dialektforschung [hat] schon von Jahren gewiesen, [dass] anstatt bestimmte Mundarten anzunehmen, deren Abgrenzung gegeneinander immer Schwierigkeiten bereitet, [ist] lieber die Begrenzung jeder einzelnen Spracherscheinung für sich zu versuchen" (Landau 1892:289).

His own masterful study of the Yiddish diminutive (1895) was a typical by-product of this theoretical orientation. In place of the "correlative" view of the history of the Yiddish dialects vis-à-vis German ones, Landau in effect tried to substitute a "random-selection" theory in which elements drawn from various regional German sources turned up unpredictably in various Yiddish dialects.<sup>6</sup>

The reaction to Landau's rather atomistic view was the application of the comparative method to Yiddish dialects, with characteristic Neo-grammarian emphasis on the regularity of phonological developments (sound laws). Prilutski, despite his flirtation with the atomistic methods which had preceded the comparative phase, was a faithful adherent of this theory,<sup>7</sup> as was almost every worker in Yiddish linguistics--Sapir, Birnbaum, Veynger, Joffe, Beranek, to name only some of the most notable scholars in the field. All of them shared an interest in tracing the development of the divergent present-day forms of Yiddish from a uniform proto-language.

Even this common point of view, however, left room for important differences on specific questions. These differences concerned three subjects in particular: (a) the relation of the reconstruction to historically attested forms; (b) the contribution of the several stock languages and their mutual relations; (c) the causes of the diversification of Yiddish.

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<sup>6</sup>"Man sieht nach dem bisherigen . . . dass in her heutigen Sprache Formen nebeneinander gebraucht werden, die verschiedenen Mundarten entstammen . . . " (Landau 1895:58).

<sup>7</sup>"I have attempted, as far as possible, to determine the laws governing the phonological development of the Yiddish language. . . . Rather than indicate that a particular M.H.G. vowel is expressed in one way in a given group of words of a particular Yiddish dialect, and in another way in other words, I formulate a rule" (Prilutski 1921:270).

With regard to (a), some scholars have used the comparative method to reconstruct Proto-Yiddish forms, later trying to evaluate the fit of the reconstruction with forms attested in medieval languages (Beranek, esp. 1957; M. Weinreich, 1954a), whereas others, assuming full identity between the proto-forms of Yiddish and medieval German, have found it possible to omit an autonomous Proto-Yiddish (Sapir 1915, Veynger 1929, Joffe 1954). On question (b), some have identified the Germanic component of Proto-Yiddish with Middle High German (Gerzon 1902, Sapir 1915, Veynger 1929, Joffe 1954), or Early Modern German (Beranek 1941:13), whereas others have viewed it as a composite of a few German dialects (Birnbbaum 1954), or of a great many (M. Weinreich 1954a); moreover, some have seen the several etymological components of Proto-Yiddish in an additive relation (Veynger 1929, Birnbbaum 1934, Joffe 1954, Beranek 1941, 1958), whereas others (notably M. Weinreich 1956b) have emphasized their early fusion. These differences, however, are of limited relevance to the main problem of this investigation; immediately pertinent is (c), the question of the causes of Yiddish dialectal diversity.

Before the application of structural principles to diachronic phonology, the only view sanctioned among linguists about the causes of language change was that they were unknown, unless they resided in the influence of another language. The large-scale overlap of the Yiddish language territory with the territories of other languages (particularly the Germanic and the Slavic) was especially conducive to the search for such contact explanations of its dialectal differentiation. And yet the attribution of specific innovations to

particular outside influences--except in the obvious case of lexical borrowing and calquing--turned out to be very difficult, and was delayed by faulty knowledge of the details of Yiddish as well as of the coteritorial languages.

Šaineamu, while labeling the Yiddish dialects according to the countries in which they were spoken (1889), still refrained from any references to outside influence. Wiener, on the other hand (1893:45ff.), and later Sapir (1915), ventured to draw a number of (usually mistaken) phonological parallels between Yiddish and Slavic or Lithuanian.

The most daring and at the same time the least well founded proposals were made by Shpilreyn (1926:7): in an otherwise excellent little book, he asserted that the features and the boundaries distinguishing the "Lithuanian," "Polish," and "Southern" (i.e. Ukrainian) dialects of Yiddish are the same as those that distinguish the coteritorial non-Jewish languages from one another. In the same year, Kalmanovitsh (1926:166) made a far more cautious claim: that languages coteritorial with Yiddish must have played an important role in inducing some of the distinguishing features of the dialects.

These claims, whether drastic or cautious, were all based more or less on intuitive insights. It remained for yet another group of scholars to attempt to specify the precise nature of the impact by reference to actual Yiddish language materials (Joffe 1927-28; Landau 1928; Shtif 1932; Shklyar 1933; Shulman 1938, 1939; Jakobson 1953; U. Weinreich 1952, 1955, 1958a, 1963). Although the works published in the Soviet Union are often burdened with ideological trappings which

surround otherwise good Yiddish linguistic research, all of the studies cited in this group, at least have the merit of being factual.

Thus there has been a gradual accumulation of convincing instances in which coteritorial languages have determined local or regional changes in Yiddish. Surprisingly enough, the implications of the mounting evidence apparently failed to impress a scholar like Veynger who laid the foundations for the posthumous publication of the first Yiddish dialect atlas (Vilenkin 1931). Veynger found patently fantastic sources for specific dialect features of Eastern Yiddish (with obvious Slavic parallels: non-organic h, confusion of hissing and hushing consonants, vocalization of l) in Middle and even Old High German (1926:202 ff.). Żirmunski's concurrence in some of Veynger's explanations (1940:247f) defies reasonable explanation, particularly in the light of some of the well-reasoned criticism that followed Veynger's death (Shtif 1929, Shklyar 1932).

On the other hand, however much these findings have freed Yiddish scholarship from the danger of viewing the language as a closed system, free from outside influence, it must be admitted that they have not shown the neighbors of Yiddish to have had any influence upon the most far-reaching and the most regular points of divergence in Yiddish structure, particularly in the system of vowels. The regularity of these divergences and of their location make them the most intriguing and obvious aspects of Yiddish dialect differentiation; they suggest that to view the causes of change in Yiddish only in terms of external influence is likewise to consider each of its dialectal manifestations as a closed system, and to ignore the

independent dynamic of European Jewish society that transcended many linguistic and political borders.

Thus today we still have reason to search for new explanations of the dialectal diversification of Yiddish. Some causes undoubtedly lie hidden in the dialect clashes with which the language was beset in its oldest period, when Yiddish was still coteritorial with German. On the other hand, some innovations can plausibly be explained as the consequences of earlier changes within the same structures (U. Weinreich 1958b). Herein lies our first reason for choosing an area in which several varieties of the language are compressed, and in which the coteritorial "substratum" is itself heterogeneous. Such a diversified area holds out the possibility of testing the relative explanatory power of structural cohesion and outside interference as factors in the diversification of Yiddish.

As we have seen, the set of problems considered above is an outgrowth of the comparative reconstructive approach to Yiddish dialect diversity which has dominated the field in recent decades. Although this approach stimulated the acquisition of considerable descriptive data and posed questions of lasting significance, it has been shown time and again to contain the seeds of its own failure. Nor is isogloss plotting an adequate answer. The absurdity of dialect splitting on the basis of individual features is nowhere more apparent than in its consequence: the very atomization of linguistic areas which it was meant to overcome in the first place. In its extreme form this procedure ultimately deprives us of the very concept of dialect.

The remedy that has been adopted for this dilemma resides in making a distinction between varieties of a language developing more or

less independently, and others resulting from the merger or contamination of the former. This seems to imply an abandonment of the Stammbaum concept and its replacement by a view of the development of Yiddish in which at least some innovations in some varieties can plausibly be explained as a consequence of contact of these varieties with other varieties of Yiddish. Thus the adjacency of one type of Yiddish with another takes its place, along with the dispersion of Yiddish among other languages, as an important factor in the history of the language. Both come to be seen as vital to an understanding of Yiddish dialect divergence and convergence.

The latter view of the development of Yiddish, in accord with the findings of linguistic geography in other languages, is only now coming into its own. In the extreme, however, it was already foreshadowed by Kalmanovitsh when he claimed (1926:165, fn.1) that the continual migration of Jews within Eastern Europe must have prevented the emergence of consistent regional dialectal patterns. "The Yiddish dialect map will certainly have a very checkered appearance: speech islands throughout." Kalmanovitsh's pessimistic outlook was unjustified. The works of both Vilenkin (1931) and Jofen (1952) proved him wrong. We can now see that Vilenkin's far more discriminating approach was also the more productive one. Recognizing the significance of Landau's comment to Săineanu concerning transition phenomena in Yiddish dialects<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>"Ich finde einen scharfen Unterschied zwischen den Dialekten Böhmens und Galiziens. Der erstere hat entschieden oberdeutschen Charakter, während das Galizische den mitteldeutschen Mundarten nähersteht. Das Mährische scheint eine Übergangsstufe zu bilden" (Landau 1892:289).



he proposed (op. cit.:x) the important task of accounting for systematic rather than random transition areas from both a purely historical and a language-historical point of view. It remained, however, for Max Weinreich (1939:71) to bring this task to the fore. Indicating the principal characteristics of transition dialects, he also pointed to a corollary of the concept of the transition area, namely, the possible "aggressiveness" of any single dialect.

The introduction of dialect contact as a determinant of the evolution of particular varieties of the language does not, of course, necessitate the complete discarding of the Stammbaum model of diversification processes. On the contrary, by increasing the range of compatible explanatory mechanisms, it challenges the linguist to explain the complex facts by a judicious combination of devices. The appearance of an innovation in a given locality can now be attributed at least to the following: (a) entailment by earlier, intrastructurally related changes in the local variety of the language; (b) importation through the immigration of speakers using the form; (c) diffusion from a neighboring dialect; (d) "borrowing" from the coteritorial language. Nor is there any reason to suppose that the cause of every innovation is the same. A pluralistic interpretation of language history is the only guarantee of realism.

The realization, growing out of linguistic geography, that innovations are in principle communicable, in turn invites the linguist to exploit the insights of structuralism by ranking innovations on a scale of communicability. The spread of highly communicable innovations can then be analyzed as reflecting the channels of communication in a sedentary society, while the spread of relatively "non-communicable"

innovations becomes a clear sign of migration of populations. The goal of dialect classification is abandoned and the geographic cross-section of a language comes to be scrutinized as a reflection of the determinants of linguistic structure, communication facilities, and outside sources of stimulation. This seems to have been among the aims of Veynger (1926:676) and Vilenkin (1929:20f., 1931:5). It is the explicit aim of the Language and Culture Atlas of Ashkenazic Jewry (hereafter LCAAJ), now in preparation.

Our own, more modest goal is to investigate the multiplicity of diversification factors in an interesting sample area. Given this aim, it is also clear why a transition area, and not a homogeneous region, was sought out for study.

### 1.3 Selection of the Area

In order to accumulate a body of suitable data it seemed appropriate to explore in detail a fairly small area which straddles an important bundle of isoglosses. The most fundamental divide within Yiddish is generally held to be that between the Western and Eastern dialects.<sup>9</sup> However, the areas through which this divide runs (as plotted by M. Weinreich 1953:45) were hardly suitable. In the north it courses through territory (Pomerania, W. Prussia) in which Yiddish

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<sup>9</sup> In his earliest treatment of Yiddish (1895:47) and shortly thereafter in an analysis of a 16th century Yiddish work (1901:24), Alfred Landau first referred to the distinction between the Yiddish spoken in the Slavic countries (EY), and that essentially coteritorial with Germanic languages (WY). Some years later (1911:xli) he made explicit a phonological criterion for the distinction of these two major groupings: "Im heutigen jd. kennzeichnet dieses a [für mhd. ei und ou] die westlichen gegenüber den polnischen und russischen Mundarten." Restricting the same criterion to the realization in

became extinct several generations ago. Where it runs through southwestern Poland, Eastern Yiddish has almost completely superseded the western variety. Still further south, in Slovakia, there are reported to be virtually no transition phenomena (Beranek 1949:45), and at its southern extremity the bundle dissolves in a highly mixed dialect (Fischer op. cit.:101; now also U. Weinreich 1964).

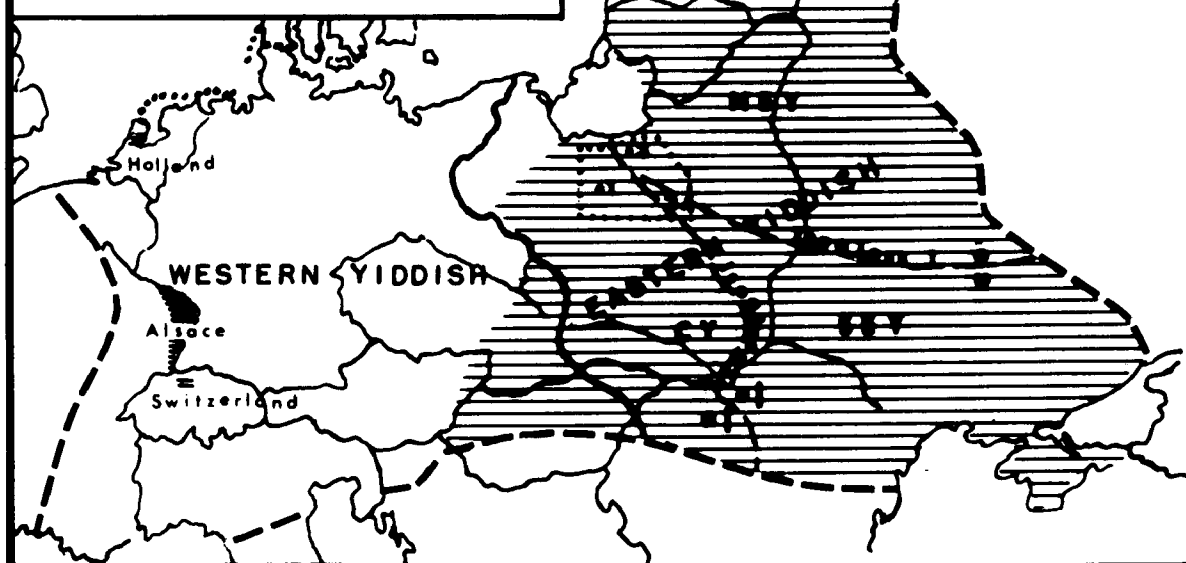
Consequently our search turned to second-order boundaries on the eastern side of the major divide. Here, it turned out, we could capitalize on the disagreement which prevails among linguists concerning the subdivision of non-Western Yiddish. Some, like Birnbaum (1915:16), set off North(east)ern Yiddish from Southern Yiddish on the basis of such isoglosses as o/u (hereafter Isogloss 1), and then subdivide Southern Yiddish according to an isogloss aj/ej (hereafter Isogloss 2) running through it. Others, like Prilutski (cf. fn. 9), make the first cut in non-Western Yiddish on the basis of the latter isogloss (Central Yiddish (CY) aj vs. eastern Yiddish ej) and only then subdivide this eastern branch into Northeastern (NEY) and Southeastern (SEY) on the basis of o/u and other isoglosses (cf. Fig. 1:1).<sup>10</sup> Although the priority of cuts is in dispute, it was already implied in Prilutski's works (e.g. 1920) that the two major dividing lines converged along the East Prussian frontier, and it was also clear (M. Weinreich 1939:70)

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Yiddish of MHG ei alone, Prilutski (1920:79) subjected EY to further subdivision. Cf. also Fischer (1936:90ff.) and M. Weinreich (1939:37ff.)

<sup>10</sup> Thus EY in contrast to WY comprises CY, NEY, and SEY; CY and SEY constitute SY in contrast to N(E)Y. According to the definition given above, the phonological isoglosses considered criterial to the subdivision of EY have been labelled Isogloss 1 and 2 in Fig. 1:1. Their location on this map, based on the evidence of earlier literature, is approximate. The precision with which they are drawn on subsequent maps, e.g. Fig. 5:1, is, however, a result of the present investigation.

**FIG.1:1 TRADITIONAL  
CLASSIFICATION OF  
YIDDISH DIALECTS**



- — Historical Boundaries of Yiddish
- ▨ Yiddish Language Area (1938)
- ..... Northern Poland
  - 1. Warsaw
  - 2. Brest-Litovsk
  - 3. Lomza
- CY Central Yiddish
- SEY Southeastern Yiddish
- NEY Northeastern Yiddish

that the coincidence of the isoglosses jointly delimiting NEY was by no means exact. It was therefore reasonable to expect that the area surrounding the point of convergence of these criterial isoglosses, encompassing as it does a coteritorial boundary between West Slavic (Polish) and East Slavic (Belorussian), would offer the required degree of variety and complexity for our study.

#### 1.4 Acquisition of Material

We have derived the data for the present study from a series of 12-15 hour interviews, each with an emigrant informant now residing in Israel or the United States.<sup>11</sup> Recourse to emigrants is mandatory in view of the destruction of the communities from which the informants originate.<sup>12</sup> Problems resulting from their emigrant experience will be considered below.

Each of the communities from which an informant was selected represents an arbitrary choice within the limits of a pre-determined rectangle.<sup>13</sup> As a rule, six such rectangles constitute a one-by-one degree component of the grid which divides the Yiddish speaking area of Central and Eastern Europe. Generally speaking, the communities are at an average of some 25 kilometers from one another. In most cases, a

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<sup>11</sup> Relevant biographical data concerning each informant is provided in Appendix I.

<sup>12</sup> In any case, Jofen (1952) proved the possibility of obtaining valid isoglosses from emigrant informants.

<sup>13</sup> For a key to the abbreviations identifying the communities on our maps see Fig. 0:1f.

completed interview with a reliable informant is considered representative of the rectangle from which the community is selected. Exceptions to this rule will be treated in the course of this discussion.

The interview with each informant is conducted on the basis of a standardized questionnaire consisting of some 3000 questions. After preliminary interviews with informants from marginal communities, it was possible to eliminate approximately 500 of the questions as inapplicable to the intervening area. Sessions with informants were of 1-1/2 and 2-1/2 hours in duration, and responses, while tape-recorded, were also simultaneously recorded in phonetic transcription.

Every aspect of the brief description of method given above raises certain problems of bias, of validity of the data, or simply of methodological efficiency. Each of these merits at least brief consideration.

#### 1.41 The Tape Recorder

The advantages of the tape recorder for linguists in the field are becoming ever more apparent. The possibility of returning to the informant again and again without ever leaving the comfort of one's study may be sufficient to recommend its use to some. Certainly it is an excellent device for preserving, for the historical record, forms of speech which might otherwise be lost due to the pressures of standardization. An archive of the "living language" should be among the secondary goals of dialect research.

Given these obvious advantages, can we go a step further and accept the suggestion that we rely upon the taped record as the primary source of our data after leaving the field? This would eliminate the necessity of simultaneous phonetic transcription and the inhibitions and

anxieties it is said to provoke in both the investigator and the informant. Though progress would seem to favor the machine, experience in this case suggests that the question posed be answered in the negative under all but the most favorable conditions.

If we were assured of the finest equipment in the highest working order, the transcription of a small corpus from tape might be at least as efficient and accurate as an on-the-spot written record. On the other hand, given the inevitable mechanical failures which result in hours of blank tape, and the vast amount of data involved in the present project, the taped record is used to best advantage as an auxiliary device, as a check on doubtful elements in the written record. Not the least of the problems that would arise from a lack of field notes, is the length of time involved in transcribing from the tape. The leisurely pace that one is tempted to set in the absence of a living informant, the possibility of stopping and starting, and the endless repetition of doubtful portions, consumes at least twice the number of hours as the original record.<sup>14</sup> Nor will frequent repetitions of a portion of the tape necessarily clarify responses that are inherently unclear. On the contrary, excessive replaying may tend to distort the listener's interpretation of what he hears. Far better to elicit repetitions from the informant during the course of an interview than to rely on picking up gaps in the written record from the tape, when the necessity for doing so can be avoided.

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<sup>14</sup>Brown and Fraser (1963:167) have found, in another context, that "going over the tape takes about four hours to each hour of recording time". In the experience of many linguists the ratio is even higher.

#### 1.42 The Standardized Questionnaire

Does the use of strict procedures, i.e. standardized questions that must be answered, seriously limit the naturalness of the informant's response and the validity of the data as typical of the community under investigation? This can presumably be the case, and as a result, alternate methods are also employed in dialect research (cf. Bottiglioni 1954:384ff.). But surely the results needn't be such. The design of the questionnaire, the manner in which it is used, and the purpose of the project for which it was designed, can mitigate its potentially restrictive features.

The questionnaire employed in this investigation is topically organized, with questions designed to permit free discussion of themes, in the course of which, sought-after phonological, grammatical and lexical data may be freely forthcoming. If the required forms fail to appear, the informant may be asked to identify an object described or indicated, and ultimately to respond to a prompted form. Could we dispense with everything other than free discussion? Perhaps, but only if our object were to describe the phonological system. At that, we would be required to approach the task of preparing a dialect atlas with a naïveté to which our knowledge of the language does not entitle us.

In the course of collecting dialect data, previously unsuspected features of the language may be discovered. More frequently, known features are discovered to exist where they were previously not anticipated. On the other hand, it should be clear that a project of this sort is not undertaken primarily to discover hitherto unknown data. On the contrary, it is best conducted on the basis of known facts of the



language, with the purpose of locating the borders of known differences, the presence or absence of known phenomena. Can this be accomplished unless all informants are subjected to comparable tests? Perhaps the standardized set of questions serves at the very least to compensate for the inevitable incompatibility of informants of different sex, age, education, etc.

#### 1.43 The Role of the Interviewer

There is a notion prevalent about anthropologists and sociologists in the field that is generally applied to the field-worker in linguistics as well. It appears to offer him a choice of roles. Either he chooses to be a "participant-observer," a role guaranteed to lead to the "real" facts, or he must be satisfied to pursue the "surveyor-questioner" method which at best can yield only unnatural, even superficial data.

We are not concerned here with the comparative efficacy of these roles. Having commented above (§1.42) on the importance of a standardized survey for a project such as ours, we would like to suggest further how the concept of a dichotomy of roles is in fact inapplicable to this very project.

The LCAAJ has extra-linguistic significance as well. The average informant, who rarely appreciates its primary linguistic goals, accepts as legitimate the secondary goal of recording his memories and experiences for posterity. He participates eagerly in creating a memorial to his own youth, and to his home and family which have been destroyed. He is proud to have been chosen to contribute to the record, to have become the center of attraction in his home and often the envy of the immediate

neighborhood. In effect, his goals and those of the field worker have merged, with the result that the interviewer now embodies the roles of both the participant-observer and the surveyor. The same factors have made it possible to conduct 2-1/2 hour sessions despite the general strictures on interviews even approximating this length (cf. Pickford 1956). It is the rare informant who is not surprised and even disappointed that after fifteen hours the work has been finished. "But I haven't even begun to tell you about . . .".

#### 1.44 Selection of Locations

Communities from which informants are chosen are as a rule arbitrarily selected. It is a sufficient condition for their selection that they be located within a specified rectangle in a predetermined grid. In what way can such arbitrary selection prejudice the resulting linguistic landscape?

There is no doubt that a different choice of locations would have the effect of changing somewhat the shape of the resulting isoglosses. As a glance at our maps will reveal, however, the consistency of responses is so great that slight changes of this sort would be of no practical significance. Even denser coverage of the area, in itself a desirable aim, would add little of significance to the achieved results.

In certain cases, however, denser coverage is mandatory if valuable data is not to be lost. One such instance is illustrated by our experience with the community Ostrelenke. On this occasion our interview was conducted with an entire family: the mother, 74 years old, and the son, 37, both born in Ostrelenke, the father, 76, raised in Ostrelenke from the age of six, but born a few kilometers away in Novegrad. The

vital factor here is that the father's birthplace falls well within the same rectangle as that of his wife and son, and could have been selected accidentally to represent it. As will become apparent in the chapters which follow, however, Ostrelenke lies on the border between several very significant distinctions, and the selection of any community to the east or west of it would have obscured an unusual combination of features from which important conclusions can be inferred. As a general rule, then, it would seem reasonable to propose that once isoglosses are drawn between any dialectal differences, the area immediately surrounding them should be more closely surveyed for possible transition phenomena which may as yet lie undiscovered. Until then, therefore, we must assume a possible margin of error of  $\pm$  25 kilometers in any geographic statement.

#### 1.45 Selection of Informants

A number of characteristics of the informant may have important effects upon the data. The following problems will be treated separately below: age, second-language learning, literary influences and dialect mixture.

1.45.1 Age of Informants. It is immediately apparent that difference in cultural experience resulting from a difference in age will affect the informant's ability to respond to different parts of the questionnaire. Frequent reference to memories about parents and grandparents who used certain words (and the objects associated with them) lends support to this assumption. Ultimately such differences in response will have to be weighed in the same fashion as differences resulting from sex, degrees of religious observance, and education. Among the most pertinent to the

present inquiry, however, are phonological differences that may be the result of differences in age.

Two examples will serve to illustrate the problem. Both pertain to the rendering of the Yiddish proto-vowel 54.<sup>15</sup> In words like Standard Yiddish krojt 'cabbage', bojx 'stomach', šrojf 'screw', our informant from Stučín used the vowel [oj] consistently. On one occasion, her husband, some years older than she, but also a native of Stučín, felt impelled to answer a question and called out [šrouf] 'screw', using a vowel completely lacking in his wife's speech. In the same set of words both parents of the family from Ostrelenke used the vowel [ou] in some cases, but [u] in most. The son rendered all words with [oj], and greeted his parents' responses with some surprise, having failed to perceive the distinction in their speech at any previous time. As will be clear from our later discussion of proto-vowel 54 (§5.14.31), the variations of [ou] and [oj] among different informants from the two towns in question is of minor significance. Had it not cropped up accidentally, the conclusions to which it can help lead us could be as easily derived from other evidence. On the other hand, had we failed to record u<sub>54</sub> through a choice of too young an informant, the loss would have been a serious one.

Sometimes the choice of a particular location, and of necessity a particular informant, must be guided by a knowledge of the literature. Thus we are informed (Kats:1924) of the existence of front rounded y<sub>51 52</sub> in a single town (Brajnsk) in this section of the Yiddish speaking area.

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<sup>15</sup> An analysis of the Yiddish proto-vowels and the notation system used to represent them is presented in Chapter 5.

After many months and miles of searching, during which some prospects denied its existence, while others remembered having eliminated this feature from their speech as a result of ridicule when they first ventured from home, it was finally possible to find an elderly informant who could not speak otherwise.

1.45.2 Monolinguals versus Bilinguals. Almost all of our informants speak Polish, Russian, German, or several of these languages in addition to Yiddish. In this sense, none of them can be classed as monolinguals. Our use of the term is rather a reference to their knowledge of the language of the country to which they have emigrated: Hebrew in Israel, and English in the United States.

Monolingual informants absorb more of the interviewer's time and effort, but if they are responsive and do not require excessive prompting they usually yield the best results. If they are not responsive, and the interviewer still seeks to avoid direct prompting in Yiddish, the results are frequently unpredictable. Thus one informant, asked for the term applied to the "line dividing one country from another held tenaciously that it was a vald 'forest'. Such a response may be instructive, but it fails to divulge the phonology and the gender of the sought-after word for 'border'.

Bilinguals, who are easier to work with, must be reminded that Hebrew or English lexical items which they may use inadvertently were not so used in Yiddish. This is a relatively simpler task than achieving a correction, without prompting, of calques of a Hebrew or English grammatical pattern which may arise in the course of translating from one of these languages. Even these are infrequent, but prompting a correction

from the informant requires that the investigator have a good knowledge both of the dialects he is investigating and the language upon which the calques may be based. Should they sometimes remain uncorrected, they still do not distort the geographical picture, since they are modelled on languages entirely outside of the system and not on another dialect of Yiddish.

1.45.3 Dialect Mixture. Dialect mixture may be of two kinds, and confusing them can have serious consequences. The first case is represented in the extreme by an individual who has simply lost the ability to speak his native dialect and should be rejected as an informant. On the other hand there are individuals who will occasionally use words inconsistent with the phonology or lexicon of their home town. This may result from literary influences or the influence of a spouse from another area. Where no better informant is available there need be no fear that such vacillations will mislead one too far. Ultimately they will be revealed as inconsistencies by the geographic confrontation of the responses from the entire area.

The second type of dialect mixture is extremely significant and, if condemned too hastily, can cause the baby to be thrown out with the bath. The informant from M'akeve offered [vajs ~~mel~~ox] for 'white sheet'. This went against the interviewer's preconceptions. Both words have etymologically the same vowel. When asked if 'white' was not [vās], the informant shrugged his shoulders and accepted the suggestion. The same form of presumed dialect mixture was then revealed in other items with the same etymological vowel (and elsewhere in the vowel system). The temptation to reject the informant on these grounds was overcome only

by the fear of insulting him. But later, Makeve turned out to be situated in a significant transition area between two dialects and to be surrounded by towns showing the same characteristic vacillations. This emphasized the significance of the second type of dialect mixture, for these are the kind of data we are looking for: living proof of change in progress. The informant's willingness to accept the prompted forms that differed from his own, reflected only his recall of how an earlier generation had spoken.

Though it is clear that a geographical display of the data would in most cases act as a check both on the authenticity of the informant's response and upon the validity of the field worker's prejudices, rigorous criteria were nevertheless applied to the selection of informants in order to mitigate potential bias in the results. Ideally, perhaps, the person interviewed should be the oldest available informant native to the town in which he lived most of his life. His spouse should be native to the same town and neither of them should have made a major detour in migrating to their new home. Though intelligent, the informant should be monolingual in the sense defined above (§.1.45.2), and should be as remote as possible from the literary language and from pressures of language standardization.

Interestingly enough, many of these conditions were met. Impossible, however, in many cases, was the requirement that the informant have lived all his years in his home town before emigrating. That he was able to save himself from Nazi terror is a tribute to his ability to flee from one Polish town to the next, and in most cases behind the Soviet lines as well. Despite this, the validity of the material which he has contributed to this study will be attested in the description and display

of the data that follow.

### 1.5 Plan of the Dissertation

Scanty though previous data have been, they made apparent the existence in the area of our investigation, of geographic limits on the scope of certain Yiddish sound laws. Our present task is to discover whether corresponding discontinuities affect other domains of the Yiddish language in this area: the (synchronic) sound system, the grammar, and the vocabulary. Do non-verbal cultural patterns display a similar break? What is the detailed form of this discontinuity? Are there characteristic geographic patterns in the language other than the prominent (South)west-(North)east cleavage? By what mechanisms--migration, diffusion, contact, structural entailment--and during what periods did the major discontinuity, and any subsidiary patterns, develop?

It seemed helpful, to begin with, to simplify the explanatory task by eliminating both contact and structural entailment as possible determinants. We therefore start, in Chapter 2, with an examination of the non-verbal ethnographic evidence, putting the stress on fairly self-contained culture patterns that are unrelated to larger systems of behavior. Next we proceed to the language and begin with problems of vocabulary (Chapter 3). Though we find ourselves, here, in the least highly structured domain of language, the possibility of system pressure must now be entertained, and--for items of Slavic origin--contact becomes a major factor. In the consideration of grammatical phenomena (Chapter 4), the role of the coteritorial languages again subsides, but the constraints of the Yiddish systems themselves--phonological as well as morphological--are put into relief. When the diverse phonologies of the area are con-



sidered (Chapter 5), structure and contact both come into full play as the ground over which innovations spread by migration or diffusion.

In Chapters 2 - 5, the maps in which the data are presented were selected from a larger number available to us, as most illustrative of the principles of our narrative. Omitted were additional examples of parallel phenomena, and items too amorphous in the distribution of their variants to permit interpretation in the context of our area alone.

In Chapter 6 we sum up the development of Yiddish in the area under study by showing the compatibility of our reconstruction with the known history of the Jews in Northern Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Finally, in Chapter 7, we attempt to draw certain conclusions of a more general nature from the experience which this study has afforded us.

## CHAPTER 2

### NON-VERBAL CULTURE

#### 2.0 Introductory Considerations

The inclusion of non-linguistic along with linguistic materials in this study is motivated by the assumption that forces fragmenting an area affect both the language and the non-verbal culture of its inhabitants. It would be of some interest to the linguist as well as the anthropologist to examine the degree of coincidence among the lines of cleavage in both domains.

Whatever the linguistic significance of an isogloss, perhaps the only matter of importance for the dialectologist qua historian (or sociologist) is its precise location. For him it is sufficient to know that specific language and culture boundaries exist, and should they tend to coincide, they will all serve him in his efforts to uncover the events in the history of a speech community that are presumed to underlie its development.

Not all non-verbal testimony will serve the purpose equally well, however. Of greatest value to us are items which are unlikely to have been locally borrowed from coterritorial cultures and, provided they are relatively free of involvement in larger systems, we can interpret their distribution as being due either to importation by the migration of carriers or to diffusion in situ. If the distribution of a number of items agrees,

it might be due to their importation-through-migration. If, on the other hand, we find a multiplicity of distributional patterns, it is more likely that all, or all but one, were formed by diffusion. For it is clear that migration should lead to the transposition of cultures in their entirety, whereas diffusion patterns can succeed each other quickly, and different ones may coexist for cultural items of a different nature. There is, for example, no reason to expect that traits connected with religious differences should have a distribution pattern identical with the one displayed by traits related to rural vs. urban differences in the same area.

As we will see below, a number of different patterns do emerge in our area. At most one of them may be the result of migration; all others--possibly all--are due to diffusion. We will postpone (for Chap. 6) the question of finding the one (if any) due to importation, and analyze them all provisionally as changes by diffusion.

In the discussion which follows, phenomena are grouped according to the geographic patterns which they display. After each item is explained and its distribution characterized, we attempt to analyze some of the socio-cultural currents which may have given rise to the observed state of affairs.

Our first concern (§2.1) is with a group of ethnographic phenomena which display a SW/NE discontinuity similar to the phonological isoglosses mentioned in Chapter 1. Next (§2.2), we consider a cluster of patterns whose distributions suggest survivals of previously more widespread phenomena and thus reveal something of the dynamics which has formed our area. Several local distributions, described in §2.22, testify to the area's capacity to absorb relatively recent innovations. Finally (§2.3),

we come to grips with some particularly direct indices of shtetl-to-shtetl (i.e. town-to-town) contact and separation, the patterns of which may have governed the flow of non-verbal as well as linguistic innovations in the most recent period.

## 2.1 The Major SW/NE Discontinuity

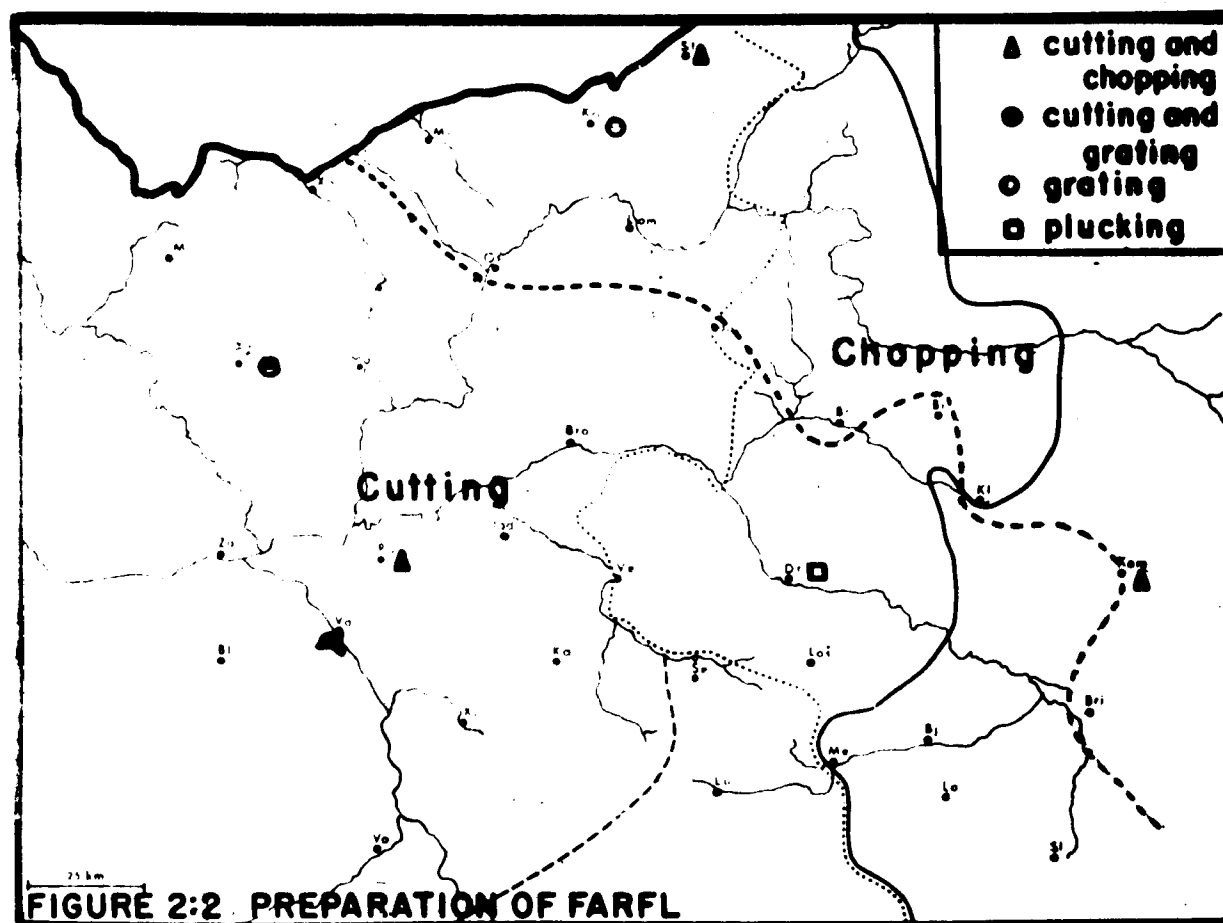
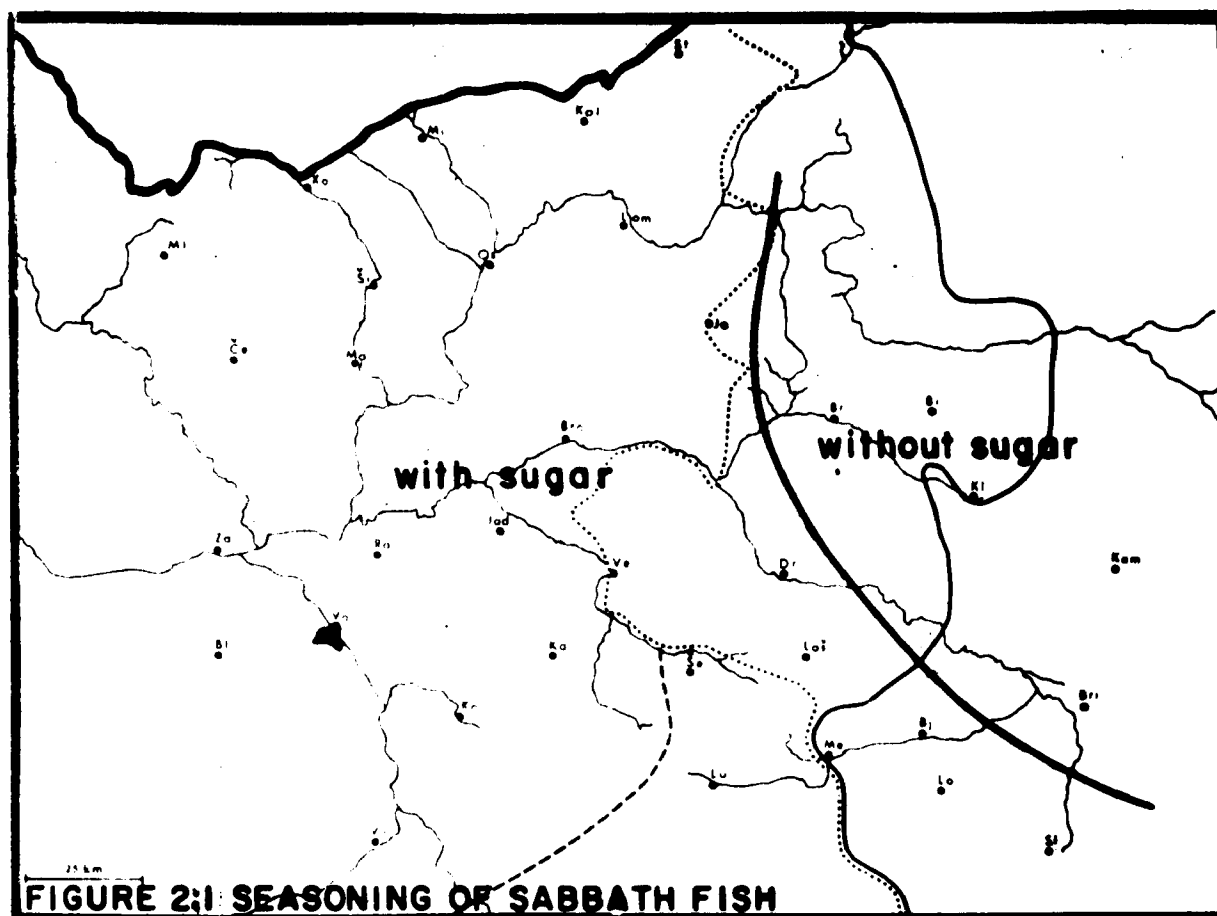
A number of items in the non-verbal domains of culture display a break in distribution which is congruent with the marked dialectological discontinuity defined in §1.3. Fig. 2:4, a composite of the isoglosses described below, reflects cultural discontinuity at almost precisely the location of Isogloss 1 (cf. Fig. 5:1).<sup>1</sup>

FIG. 2:1 Seasoning of Sabbath Fish. The custom of preparing fish as a Sabbath delicacy dates at least to Talmudic times (Schauss 1938:32), and is universal in our area. However, sweetened fish, also called *pojliše fiś* 'Polish fish' is generally unpalatable to those east of the indicated border, who prefer their fish seasoned only with pepper.

FIG. 2:2 Preparation of Farfl. The area is also sharply divided in the manner of preparing farfl, cut squares or pellets of dough. Some of the more isolated variants appearing on this map are at home in different regions of their own which lie beyond the scope of the present study (U. Weinreich 1962b: Fig. 2). Weinreich has argued that the southwestern

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<sup>1</sup>The reader will observe that a composite map, intended as it is to illustrate the degree of coincidence in the distribution of the items it represents, often omits some of the details that were included in the maps illustrating its individual components.



method of cutting is the novel one, and the same presumption of novelty may be applied to the southwestern variety of fish illustrated in Fig. 2:1. The very fact that it has a distinctive name suggests its more recent introduction into the area.

FIG. 2:3 Informants From Hasidic Families. We observe with remarkable clarity the border between those of our informants whose families were members of Hasidic sects and those who were not.

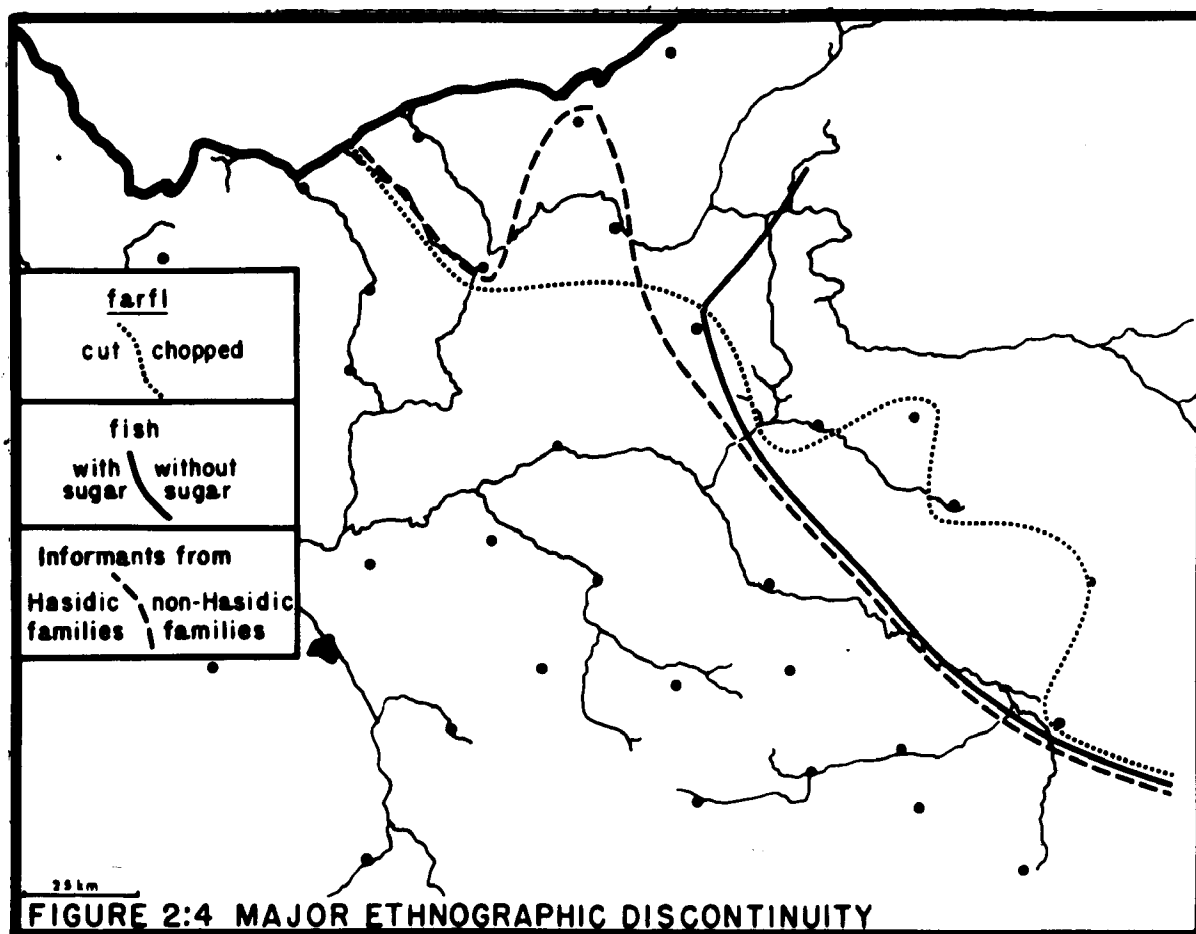
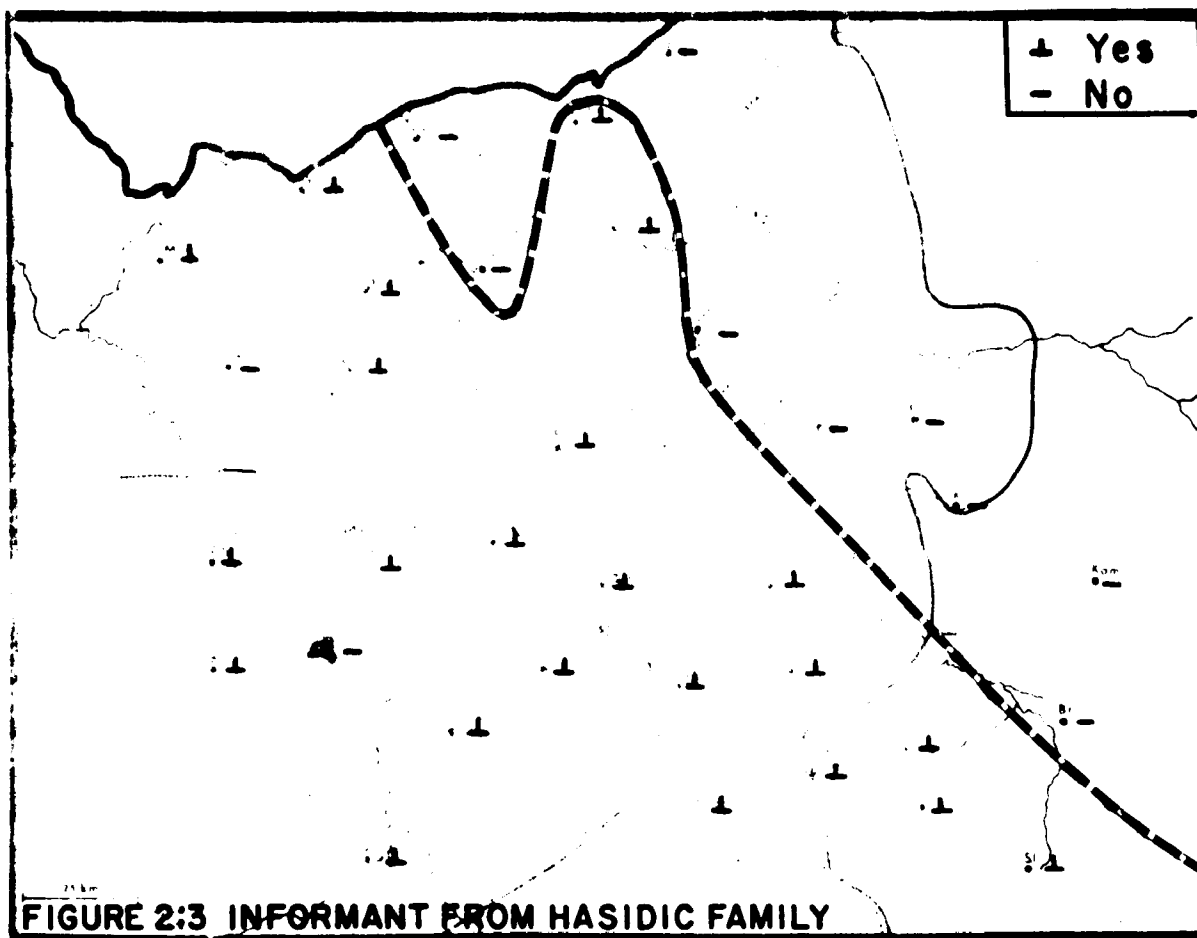
This difference in religious orientation is one of the most direct indices of cultural contact which could be obtained. Since the geographic and chronological dimensions of the spread of Hasidism are known (at least in approximate terms), it is very useful, before proceeding any further, to consider the implications of this isopleth<sup>2</sup> for the communication history of the area.

The Hasidic movement, which sprang up in the Ukraine around the figure of Israel Bal Shem Tov (1700-1760), is known to have swept westward during the latter part of the 18th century, completely engulfing Polish Jewry during the decades that followed: after a century of despair, of false messiahs and Cossack massacres, the Jews of Eastern Europe were ripe for the joy and the hope which the Hasidic Masters held out to the ordinary man.

A reflex of the diffusion of Hasidism is found in the migration of the early Masters (Dubnow 1924:VII, 405 on the migration of the Bal Shem Tov) and particularly the path along which their permanent residences were established. In some cases the Hasidic Masters (Tsadikim) were in fact

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<sup>2</sup>We use "isopleth" to designate a boundary around the distribution area of a culture trait. An isogloss can be viewed as a particular kind of isopleth. For an example of this usage, see Milke (1949).



the direct carriers of the new ideology: "it sometimes occurred that when the Rebe, the Tsadik, appeared in some locale, the entire Jewish population . . . was converted to Hasidism" (ibid.:410). More frequently, however, the new faith was dispersed by loyal followers who came from the surrounding towns for inspiration. We know of no intrinsic reason why a particular sect of Hasidim should have held more attraction for one town than for another, and thus the distinctive scope of a particular sect may be interpreted, roughly, as reflecting normal channels for the diffusion of cultural stimuli.

In Fig. 2:5 we have plotted the establishment of Hasidic residences from which the most influential sects in our area are "descended", as it can be approximately reconstructed from Table 1. This table follows Buber (1948:388ff.) but for a fuller account, not always in agreement with Buber's, cf. Eshkoli (1953). Our representation is, of course, as full of gaps as the historical study of Hasidism. In the absence of accessible biographies of the Masters, their dates of death have been used in lieu of the dates of actual establishment of residence. Moreover, since the account comes to an end with the major figures of the mid-19th century, it does not enable us to analyze the geographic scope of the loyalties claimed by the numerous 20th-century grandsons of the Masters represented on the map.



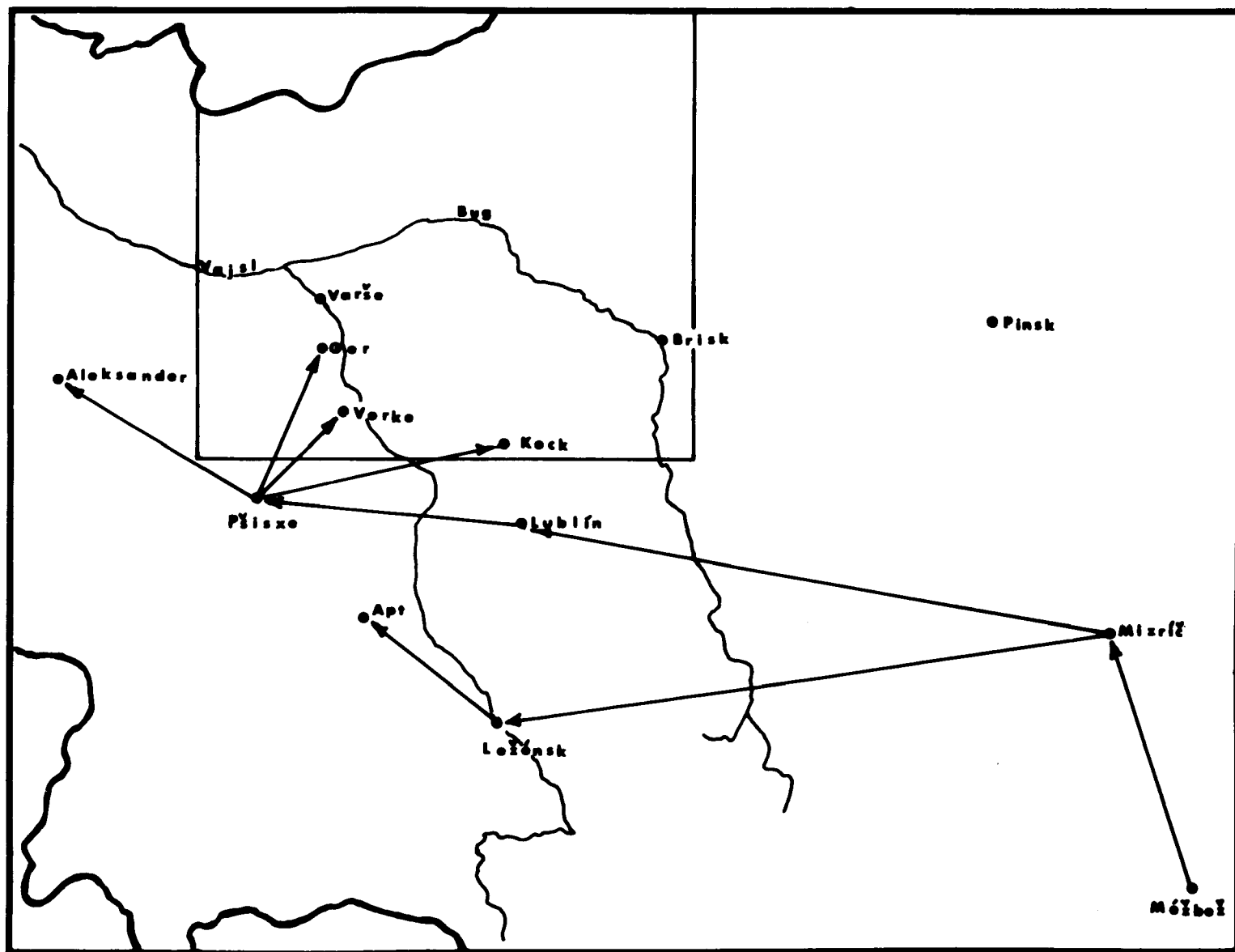
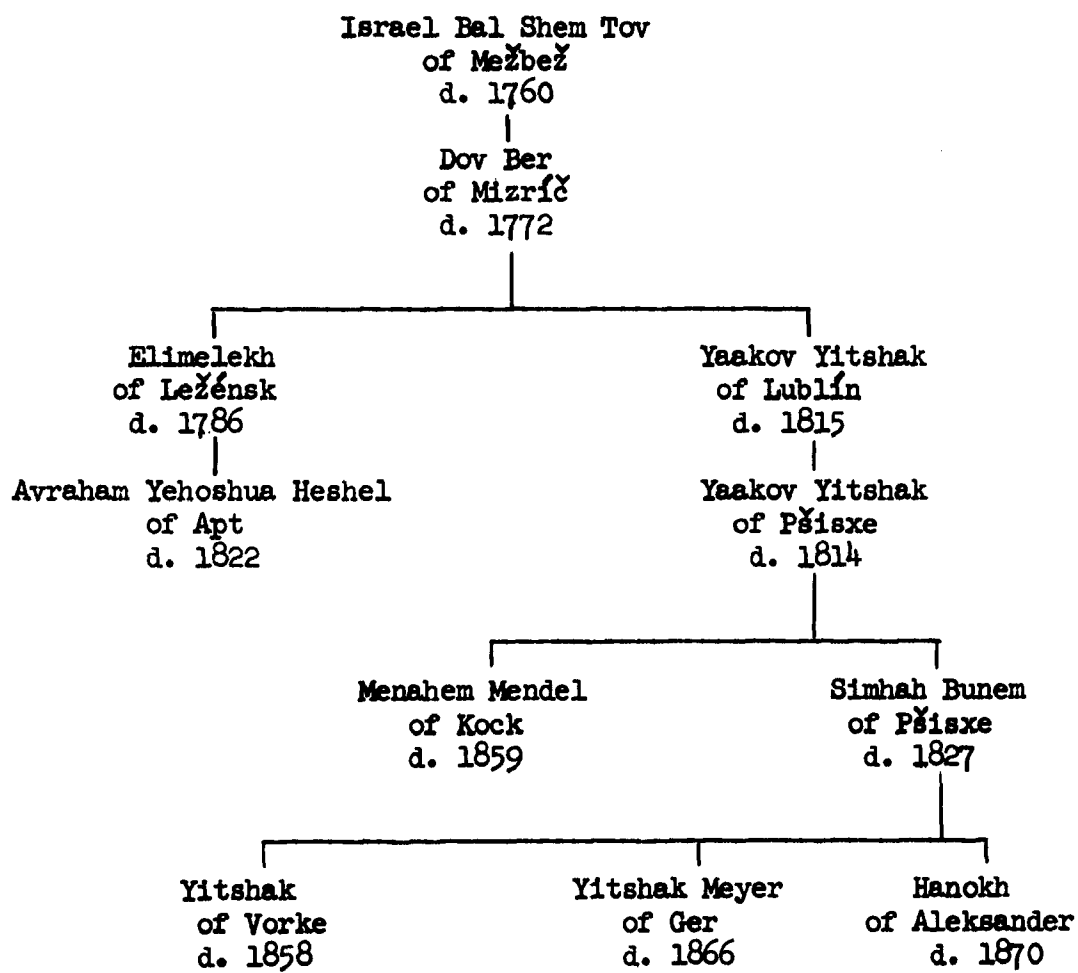


FIG. 2:5 THE SPREAD OF HASIDISM INTO NORTHERN POLAND

TABLE 1  
GENEALOGY OF HASIDIC MASTERS<sup>a</sup>



<sup>a</sup>Lines designate master-disciple relations, not biological kinship.

However, the general sequence of events is as clear as their geographic momentum. We see the new religious orientation spreading northward through Poland and coming to a halt somewhere within the area we are considering.

The history of Hasidism suggests the need for some caution in evaluating the isopleth of Fig. 2:3 as the outer limit of the appeal exercised by this movement. Hasidism did make early inroads into Lithuania and Belorussia, and was forced to retreat, or to develop compromise forms, under the impact of relentless rabbinical persecution emanating from Vilna (Yid. Vilne) from 1772 on (Dubnow 1924:VII, 414). Unfortunately we have no access to the genealogical data on minor figures whose incursion into the northeast, and retreat from there, might be geographically represented on a map like Fig. 2:5. We are left, in any case, with two possible interpretations of the isopleth in Fig. 2:3: it may be taken as the high-water mark of the Hasidic tide, or as the southwestern limit of success of the anti-Hasidic counter-offensive.<sup>3</sup>

Here the evidence of Figs. 2:1 and 2:2 becomes relevant. These items, being ideologically neutral, are unlikely ever to have been the objects of a counter-offensive by the Lithuanian rabbis. And yet they seem to show the spread of innovations from the southwest to the northeast

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<sup>3</sup> Similar alternatives are for example suggested by the present-day borders between Protestant and Catholic communities in Europe. Formerly more widespread, the Protestant domain contracted in the face of the Catholic Counterreformation in the 16th and 17th centuries.

coming to a halt along the same line as the ideologically loaded innovation of Hasidism. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the rejection of Hasidism to the northeast of the boundary in Fig. 2:3 was determined less significantly by the deliberate intervention of the rabbis than by "the Litvak's" intangible yet powerful reaction against the charismatic qualities claimed for the Tsadikim and the emotionalism that characterized Hasidic worship.<sup>4</sup> Had it been otherwise we might expect Hasidism to have receded beyond the limits of the innocuous culinary phenomena described earlier.

Our informants having been selected according to their "linguistic biographies" (see §1.45), it cannot be expected that they were necessarily the most authoritative witnesses concerning the Hasidic sects active in their towns. In view of the major implications which the detailed geography of Hasidism holds for Yiddish historical dialectology and for modern Jewish culture history, it would be appropriate to resume this investigation with more specialized informants from the same communities. There is no reason, however, to discard the data obtained. We are safe in considering our informants as a random sample of at least moderate reliability, since their testimony is self-confirming in the cohesiveness of the geographic distributions disclosed (cf. §1.45.3).

The data collected make it possible to inquire into the spread not only of Hasidism as a whole, but also of particular sects. In

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<sup>4</sup>While the stereotype of the rationalistic, anti-Hasidic Litvak (Lithuanian-Belorussian Jew) is familiar in Jewish folklore and literature, and has been related to the geography of Yiddish dialects (Fischer 1936:95), the anthropological study of this problem in regional culture and personality has not even been broached.

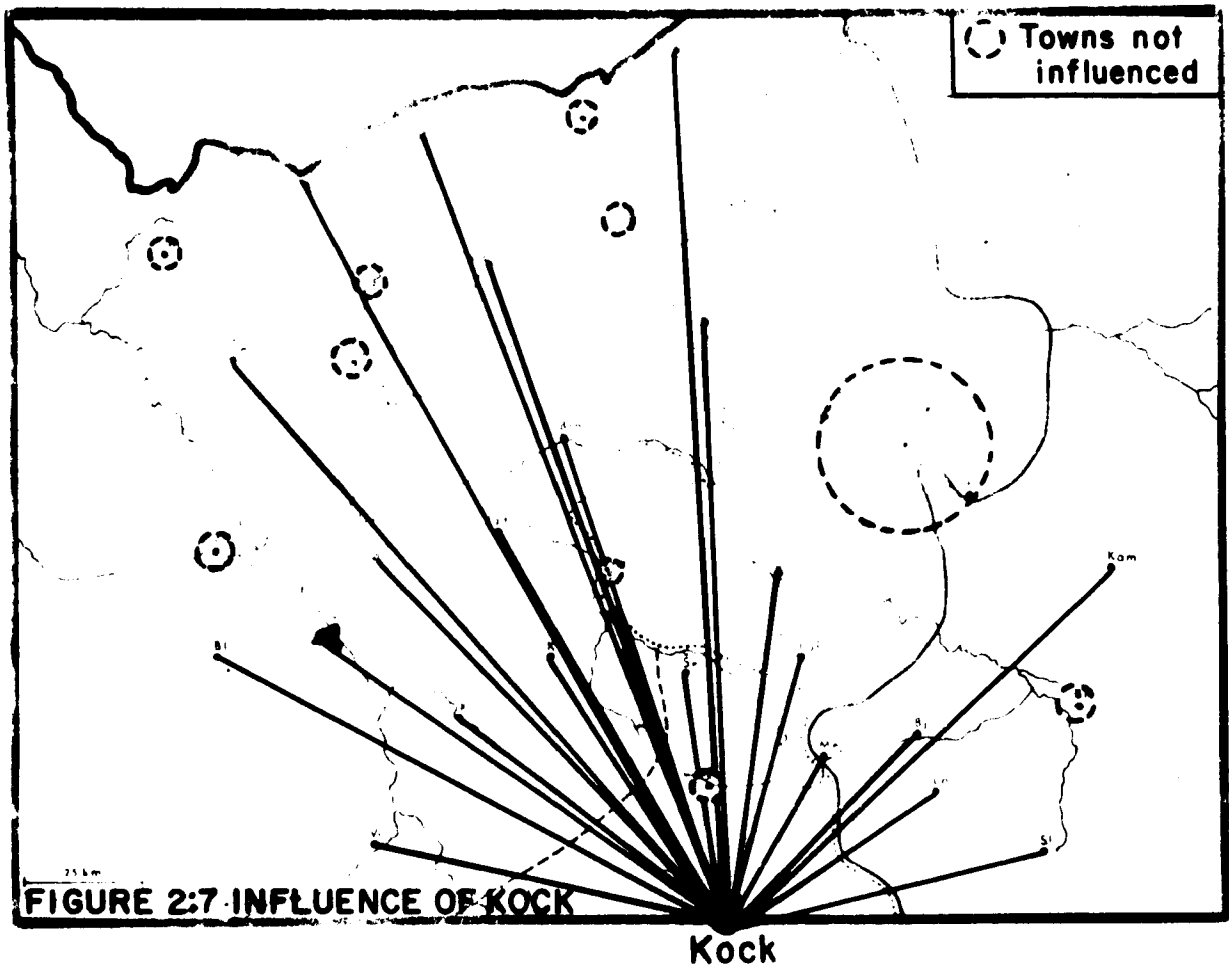
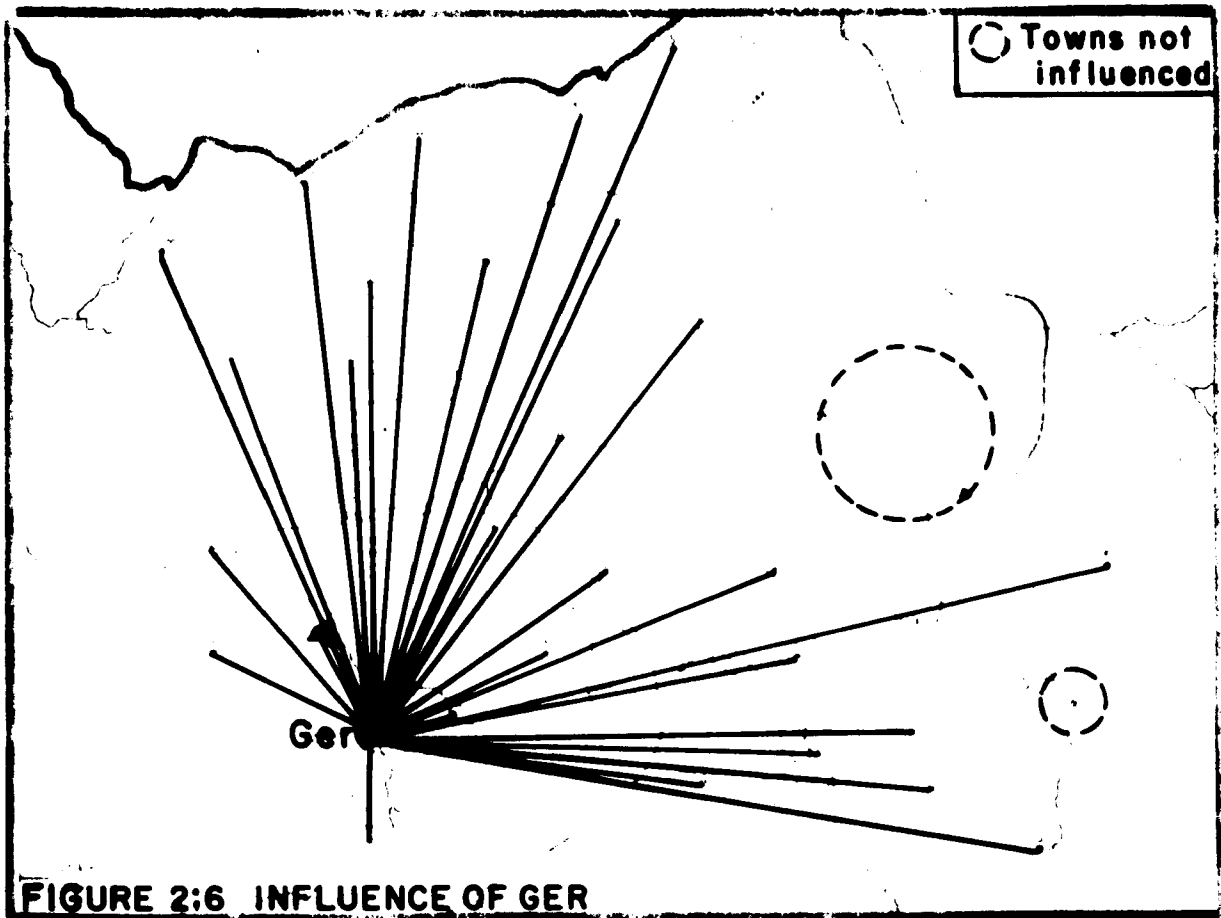
Figs. 2:6 and 2:7, we have charted from the testimony of our informants the recent ranges of influence of two sects whose residential centers lie within our area--Ger and Kock. Figs. 2:8 and 2:9, on the other hand, plot the radii of influence of two centers, Apt and Aleksander, situated outside our area proper. It may be noted that members particularly of the former two sects are reported from points beyond the line which bounds the Hasidim among our sample of informants (Fig. 2:3). However, we may assume that their numbers were significantly thinner to the east of that line.

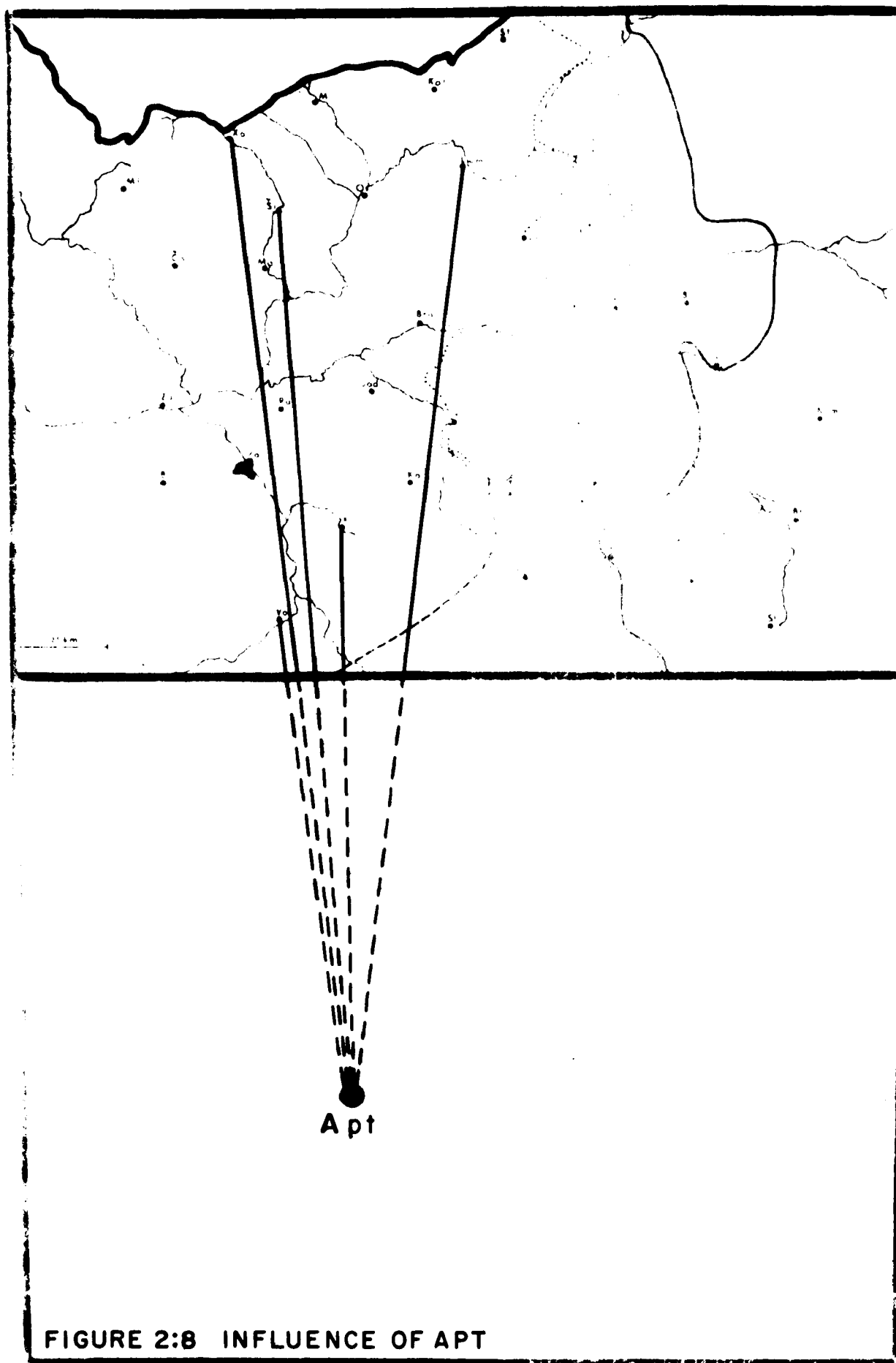
The geography of Hasidism permits an important chronological inference about the culture history of this area: in the middle decades of the 19th century, communication conditions were such that fundamental innovations could spread quite rapidly northeastward, coming to a halt (or being brought to a halt) along a line appearing as the isopleth in Fig. 2:3. This does not, of course, tell us whether comparable innovations would have traced the same patterns say, before 1820 or after 1870 or so. It does suggest, however, that innovations forming different geographic patterns either belong to a different period or were involved with different determinants than those which created the Hasidic-anti-Hasidic equilibrium of the mid-19th century.

We will have occasion to utilize this criterion in the argument below.

## 2.2 Other Geographic Patterns

It must not be assumed that the regional differences described in the following maps are related to the degree of individual piety of our









informants. Both Hasidim and non-Hasidim had their share of zealots and heretics, but these extremes seem to be of little consequence to our findings. Equally observant (or non-observant) Jews in different areas differed in their holiday customs, birth, marriage, and death rites, food habits, and so forth. Such variation pervaded all areas of Jewish life that were not specifically codified and it is not surprising to discover that distinct regional patterns emerge. Some of them may bear the stamp of local experience and reflect the relations between Jews and their Christian neighbors.

## 2.21 Survival Patterns

The ordering of the following data suggests the varying degrees of efficacy with which forces of cultural leveling have affected different facets of Jewish shtetl life. In the extreme, the effects of these forces are of no interest in the present context. Thus we are unconcerned with customs that have been totally eliminated from the area, and with others that are practiced universally within it. But at least three intermediate stages are discernible which concern us immediately.

2.21.1 Continuous Survival Areas. The following illustrations depict the retention of certain practices in relatively large contiguous areas.

FIG. 2:10 vaxmaxt 'VIGIL'. On the eve of the circumcision, the power of the evil spirits over the new-born child was said to be at its height. The custom of observing an all-night vigil until the rite of circumcision freed the helpless child from the threat of evil was already mentioned by Jewish writers in the 12th century (Schauss 1950:33f.).<sup>5</sup>

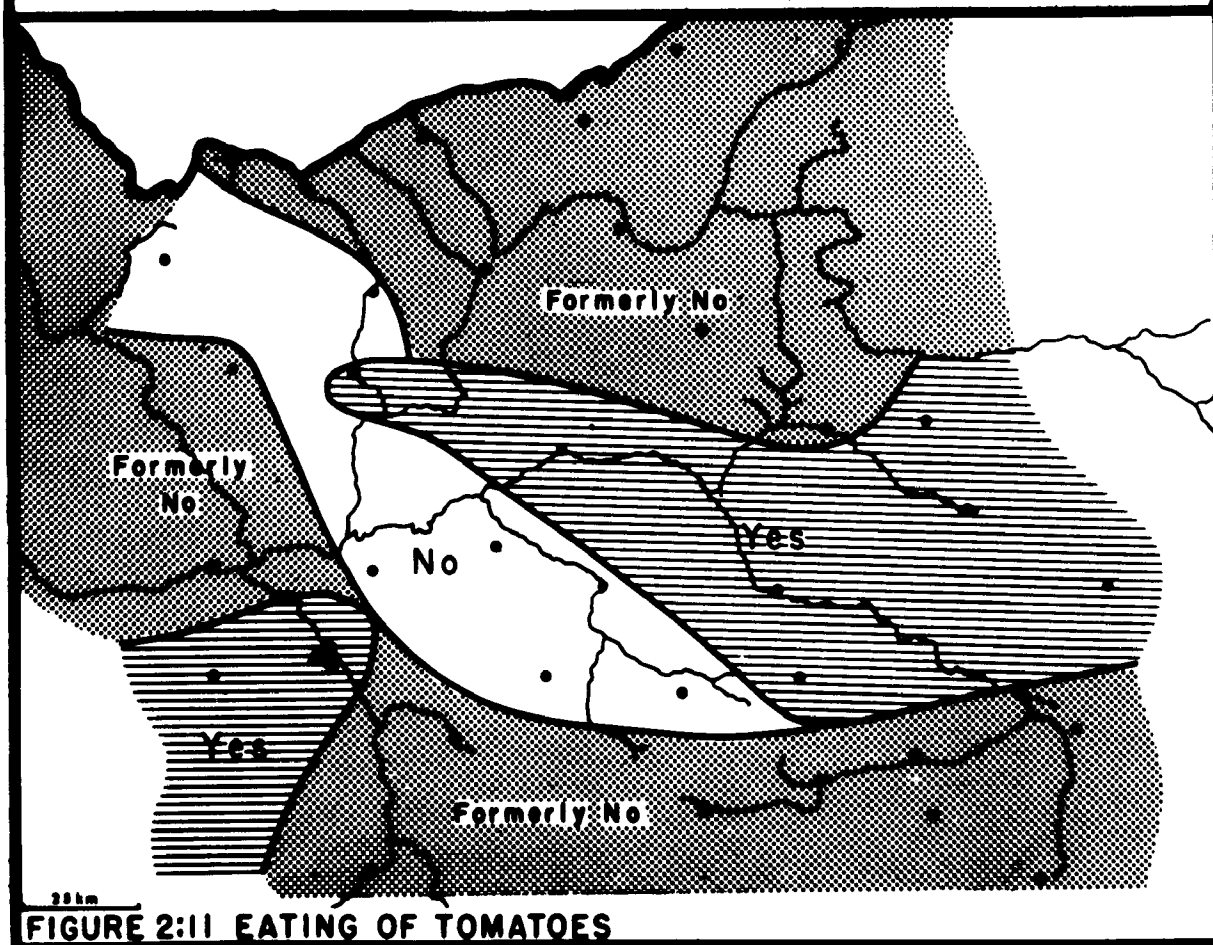
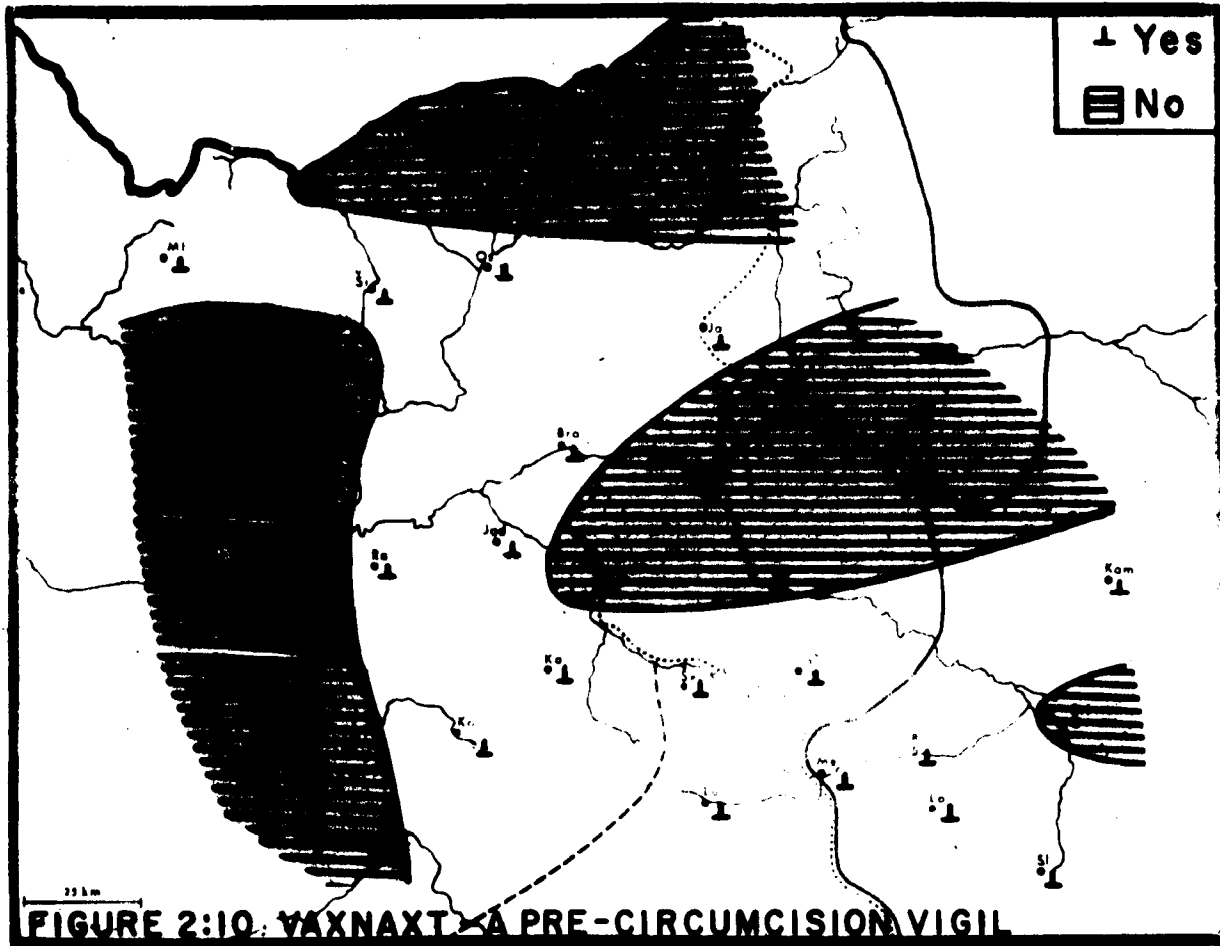
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<sup>5</sup> For an earlier set of questions designed to determine the nature and distribution of vaxmaxt observances see Anski (1914: Nos. 138-144).

As the map shows, the area of retention is surrounded by a number of islands in which the practice has been abandoned.

FIG. 2:11 The Eating of Tomatoes. Restrictions against the eating of tomatoes, deeply embedded in European folklore, merit separate monographic treatment. Briefly, let it be said that tomatoes were introduced into Europe towards the end of the sixteenth century, but were rarely cultivated as an edible fruit during the 300 years that followed (BKL XVIII, 744f.). The variety of names attached to them (Goldapfel, Paradiesapfel, Liebesapfel) suggest the decorative function which they served and the aphrodisiac qualities attributed to them, the latter apparently as a result of the confusion between pomme de Moro and pomme d'amour (SDF II, 647). Frequently the tomato was considered poisonous (Larousse 1866: XV, 277); among Jews its avoidance was often defined in terms of ritual purity. Since it was said to contain blood, the tomato was considered trejf 'ritually impure'. Informants recall the fear and the fainting that accompanied their first brave attempts to eat it. Though tomatoes are generally called pomidorn in the area (cf. Polish pomidor) it is interesting to note that two of the informants (from Šilc and Kalešín) for whom they were trejf called them kalifjorn--the usual term for 'cauliflowers', another item reputedly in the category of forbidden foods (Prilutski 1938: 64).

The specific focus of each of these illustrations is somewhat different, though both the pre-circumcision vigil and the restriction against the eating of tomatoes are clearly survivals receding in the face of pressures from east and west. It is also apparent, however, that the elimination of the belief concerning tomatoes permits a correlative interpretation in terms of innovation as well. We take up



this approach in a later discussion (§6.43).

2.21.2 Sporadic Survival Patterns. Prior to its disappearance, a traditional practice is apt to be retained in isolated locations throughout an area. The antiquity of the customs depicted in Figs. 2:12 and 2:13 is suggested by the islands of retention surrounded by areas of loss that appear to extend well beyond the boundaries of our map.<sup>6</sup>

FIG. 2:12 Symbolic Holiday Foods: Head of a Sheep. The head of a sheep is traditionally considered a part of the festive meal served on the Jewish New Year, apparently in remembrance of the sacrifice of Isaac "whose ransom was a ram, and which took place on Rosh Hashanah ['the head of the year']" (Liliental 1914: II, 64).

Frequently the head of a fish, more readily available, is served to the head of the household.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>"For chronological purposes, cases of the interrupted distribution of a culture element are of particular importance. In a general way, a culture element whose area of distribution is a broken one must be considered as of older date, other things being equal, than a culture element diffused over an equivalent but continuous area. The reason for this is that in the former case we have to add to the lapse of time allowed for the diffusion of the element over its area of distribution the time taken to bring about the present isolation of the two areas, a time that may vary from a few years or a generation to a number of centuries" (Sapir 1916: 423). This, of course, is also a well known tenet of the Italian school of areal linguistics (cf. Bartoli and Vidossi 1943).

<sup>7</sup>This substitution is sanctioned in the Shulhan arukh (Orah hayim, 583b) on the grounds that it satisfies the condition for saying "that we may be the head and not the tail" (Deuter. 28:13). Other evidence that the custom is of considerable age is cited by Liliental (op. cit.) from Israel Abrahams (1896).

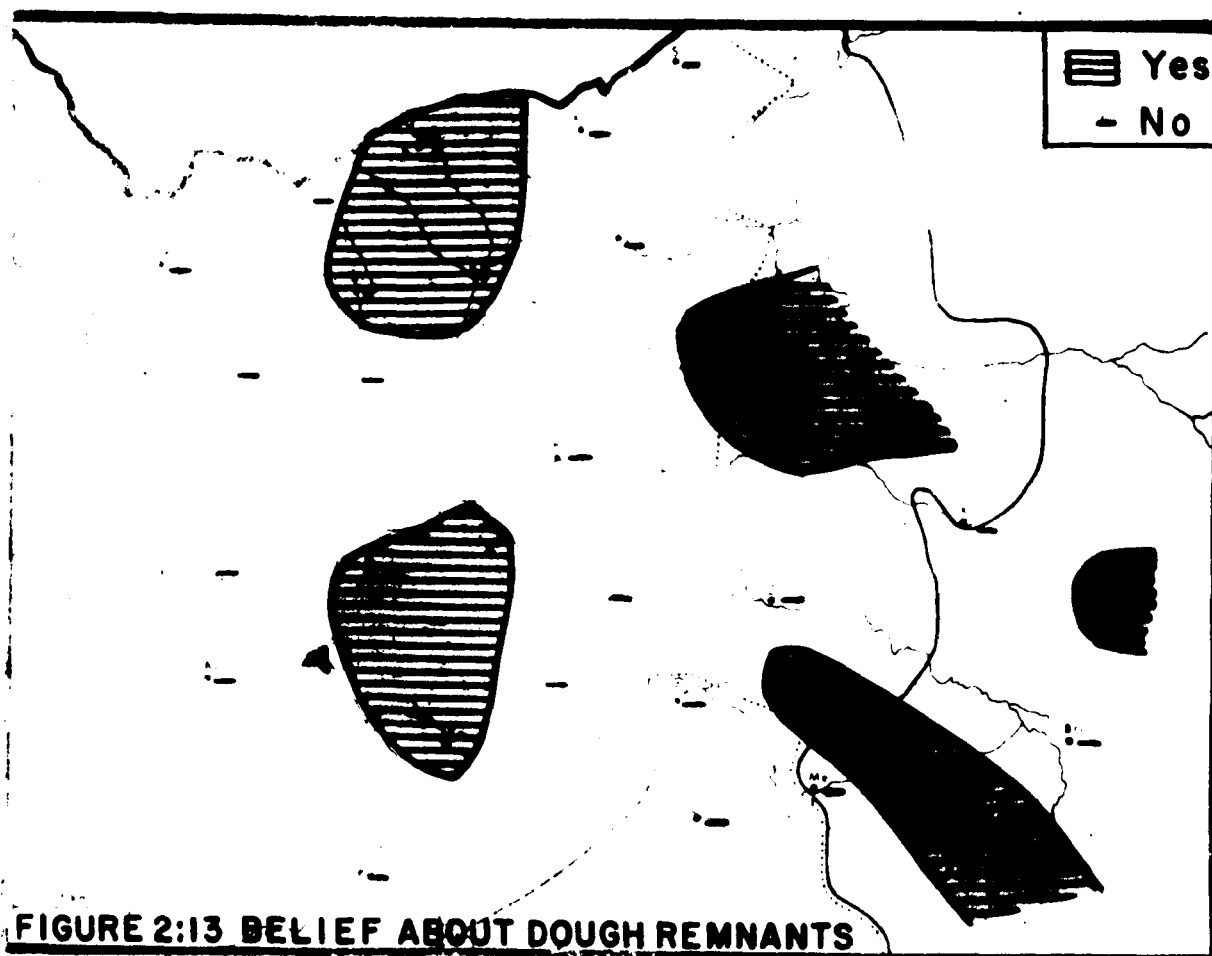
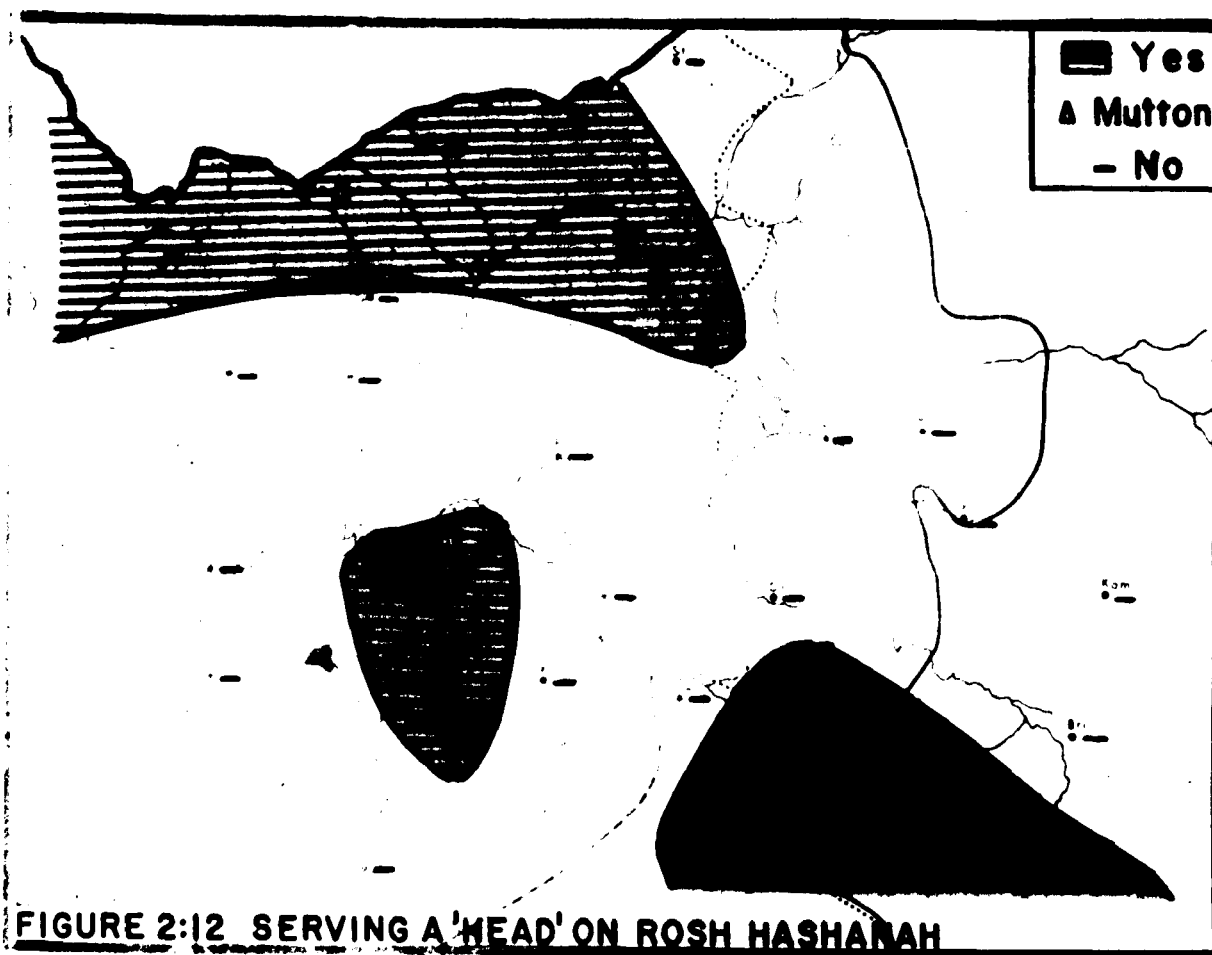


FIG. 2:13 Dough Remnants. While even beliefs concerning the ritual purity of foods may be related to attitudes not strictly Jewish in origin (cf. Fig. 2:11), it is still more likely that food habits unrelated to matters of ritual, are common to both Jews and non-Jews in the area. Among these may be the belief that dough remnants "clog the brain" and should not be eaten by schoolboys.<sup>8</sup>

2.21.3 The Central "Channels of Extinction". As we have seen, where survival areas are continuous, forces from east and west are simply "converging"; where they are sporadic, the efficacy of these forces, though short of totality is nevertheless nearing completion.

The following illustrations seem to occupy a place in the process somewhere in between the two. They depict the most prominent, and from an ethno-historical point of view, the most interesting distributional patterns that emerge from our non-verbal data. As a result of the breakthrough of the converging forces, a virtual path or channel of extinction has been cut through the area. This path assumes two different directions, each of which we will illustrate separately.

2.21.31 The "Horizontal" Channel of Extinction.

FIG. 2:14 Ladder Decorations on Holiday Loaves. On various festive occasions, the hallah loaf was topped with decorative twists of dough representing birds, ladders, hands, keys, and other objects generally

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<sup>8</sup> We have actually found no reference to a similar belief among the Poles. The belief that illness will result from eating cakes baked from dough remnants is reported from Germany, however (Bächtold-Stäubli 1936: VIII, 721).

symbolizing the facilitation of the ascent of prayers to Heaven.<sup>9</sup> That the distribution of some of these symbols was a regional matter was shown by U. Weinreich (1962b, Fig. 3: birds, ladders).

Our map indicates that the custom of ladder decorations, on the loaf for the High Holidays, was current in the area except for a strip running east and west through the center of the region.

FIG. 2:15 Eating Carrots on Rosh Hashanah. Among the foods served on the New Year are those that lend themselves easily to sweetening.<sup>10</sup> Carrots have the additional advantage of their name, mern, locally homonymous with mern 'to multiply', and bode well for an increase in happiness and good fortune.

FIG. 2:16 Composite of Figs. 2:14 - 2:15.

In these cases, as in those to follow, we must always decide between the possibility of independent innovation in the north and south as against geographically discontinuous survivals.

We have no reasonable grounds for considering the subjects of our maps as polygenetic innovations. We are therefore compelled to treat them as survivals of customs formerly observed throughout the entire

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Liliental (1914: II, 65, and Fig. 1; Schauss (1938:194); Yidisher folklor (1955:45) contains pen-and-ink drawings of some of these dough decorations.

<sup>10</sup> Presaging "the sweetness of the coming year . . ." (Schauss op.cit.:158). Liliental (op. cit.:58 f.) recognizes this custom among Jews as part of the complex of sympathetic magic that pervades the entire European continent.

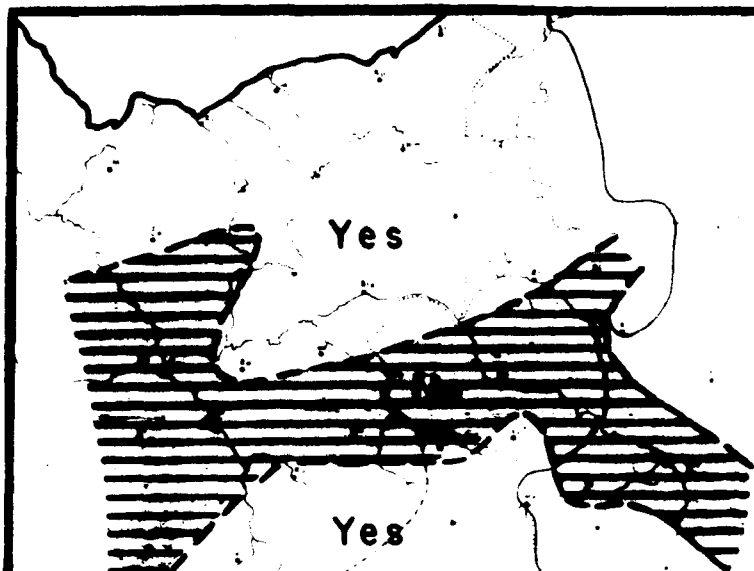


FIGURE 2:14 LADDER ON HALLAH

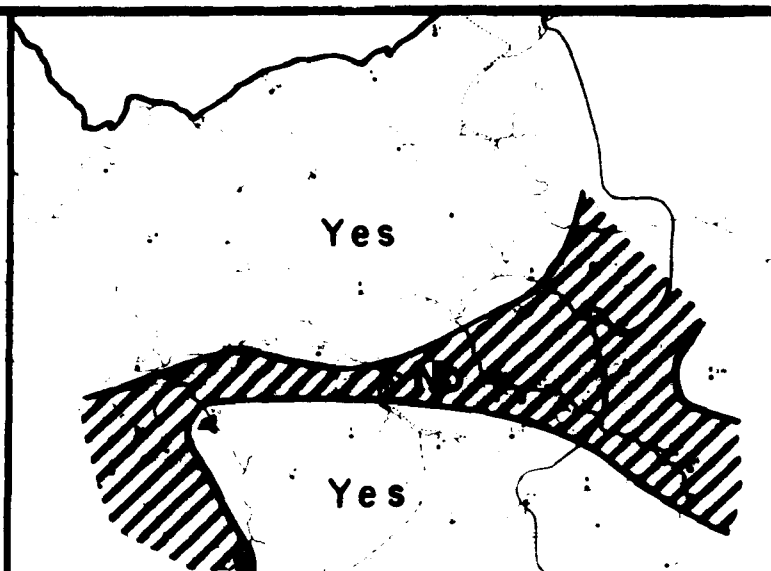


FIGURE 2:15 CARROTS FOR ROSH HASHANAH

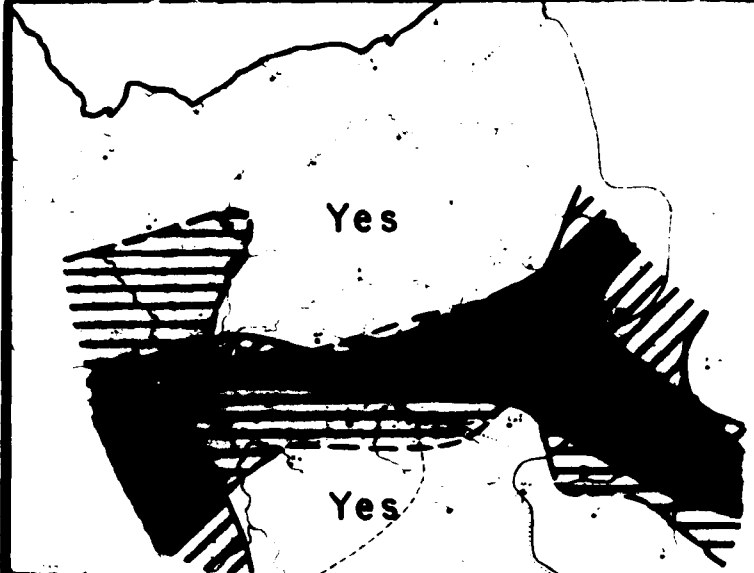


FIGURE 2:16 COMPOSITE OF FIGURES 2:14 - 2:15

"HORIZONTAL" CHANNEL  
OF EXTINCTION



area.<sup>11</sup>

2.21.32 The "Diagonal" Channel of Extinction. Although we offer more numerous instances of the channel of extinction that runs essentially between the southwest and northeast corners, it is in effect no different from the horizontal one.

FIG. 2:17 Cemetery Measuring. Among the practices for the succor of the gravely sick was the invocation of the aid of the pious dead on behalf of their relatives. In addition to the direct method of prayer at the grave of a potential pleader in Heaven, there was the more indirect method of "measuring fields" (mestn feld; "field" = "cemetery"). As Schauss describes it (1950:54):

Sometimes . . . [they] "measure the field" . . . spanning the ground of the cemetery with a ball of thread which they unroll. The thread is then taken to the candle-maker who uses it for candle wicks which are donated to the synagogue.<sup>12</sup>

FIG. 2:18 Nut Games on Sukkoth. Children's nut games are generally associated with Passover. Preliminary LCAAJ investigation (U. Weinreich 1962a: Fig. 7) revealed that they were more frequently associated with Sukkoth (the fall harvest festival) in the Rumanian and Hungarian areas.

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<sup>11</sup>The conditions under which one should hesitate to posit the monogenesis of a culture element of interrupted geographic distribution have been plainly set forth by Edward Sapir (1916:423): "Where the geographical distance is great, the resemblance limited to features of a very general character, and, more important still, the historical trend of the culture element which has been reconstructed for each area proves to run in quite different senses, it would be extremely hazardous, in the absence of other evidence to infer historical connexion." In our own judgment, none of these conditions prevail in the case of the discontinuous distributions under consideration.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. also ibid.: 259; Khayes (1928:295).

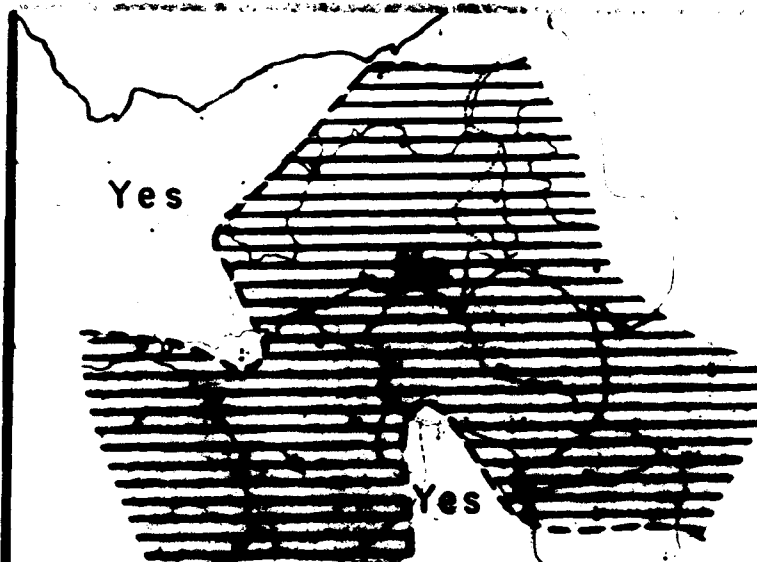


FIGURE 2:17. CEMETERY MEASURING

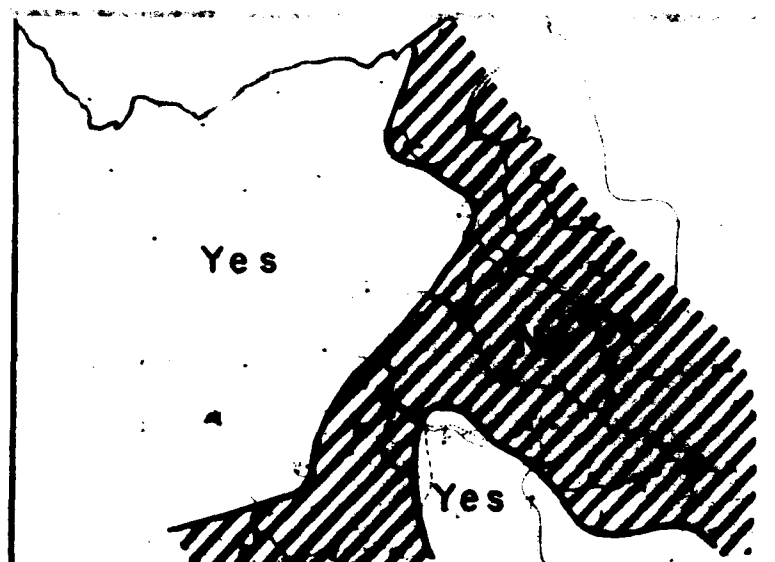


FIGURE 2:18. SUKKOTH NUT GAMES



FIGURE 2:19. COMPOSITE OF FIGURES 2:17-2:18

"DIAGONAL" CHANNEL  
OF EXTINCTION

Now it is apparent that this association was customary in Poland as well.

FIG. 2:19 Composite of Figs. 2:17 - 2:18.

FIG. 2:20 Use of a Funeral Wagon. As a rule, no vehicle was used to transport the dead from the town to the distant cemetery. By carrying the bier on their shoulders the entire distance, the townsfolk paid tribute to the deceased, earning "religious merit thereby" (Schauss op. cit.:264).<sup>13</sup>

Everywhere it was conceded that prestigious members of the community were carried to the grave. In most communities, however, a vehicle had been introduced to bear the common man.

FIG. 2:21 Non-Kosher Mushrooms. Were there varieties of mushrooms that were trejf, i.e. that only non-Jews could eat? Apparently so. Whatever the origin of this belief it is undoubtedly the source of the Polish term żydówka for the variety of mushroom said to be the only one that Jews would eat (Tarnacki 1939:58).

FIG. 2:22 Composite of Figs. 2:20 - 2:21.

FIG. 2:23 Baked Farfl on Rosh Hashanah. Apparently because they lent themselves to rapid preparation after the return from the synagogue, baked farfl were among the traditional New Year's foods as well. (The regionally differentiated ways of preparing farfl were shown in Fig. 2:2).

FIG. 2:24 rošeprokim. More often called a vort 'word, promise' the rošeprokim ceremony represented an informal pre-betrothal agreement between the parents of the prospective bride and groom.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup>Cf. also Anski (1914: No. 1779); Khayes (loc. cit.).

<sup>14</sup>The distribution of this custom in the context of the entire Ashkenazic area has been plotted by U. Weinreich (1962b: Fig. 4); cf. also Anski (op. cit.: Nos. 1038-1039).



FIGURE 2:20: CARRY CORPSE ONLY

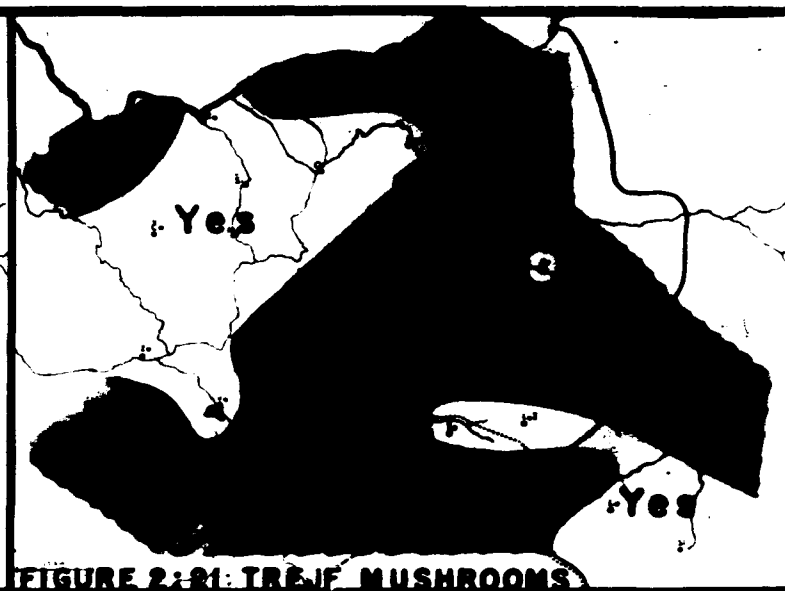


FIGURE 2:21: TREE MUSHROOMS

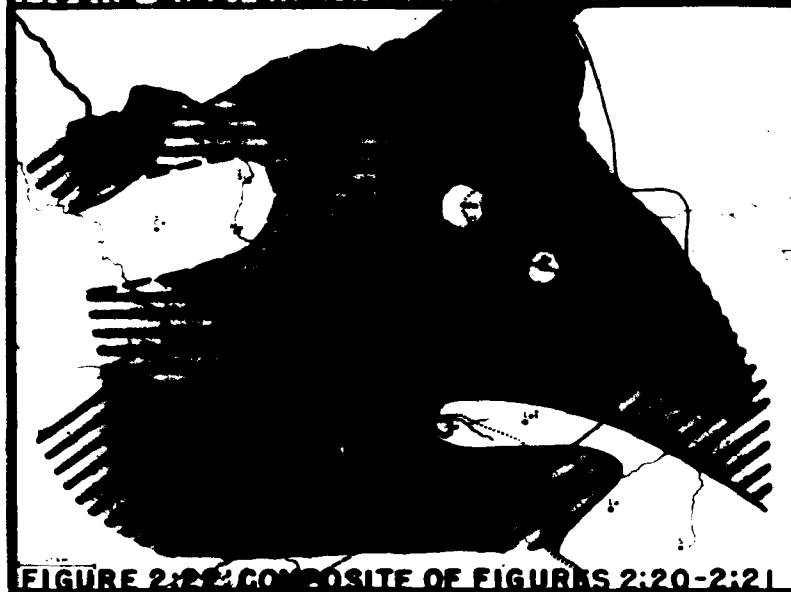


FIGURE 2:22: COMPOSITE OF FIGURES 2:20-2:21

"DIAGONAL" CHANNEL  
OF EXTINCTION

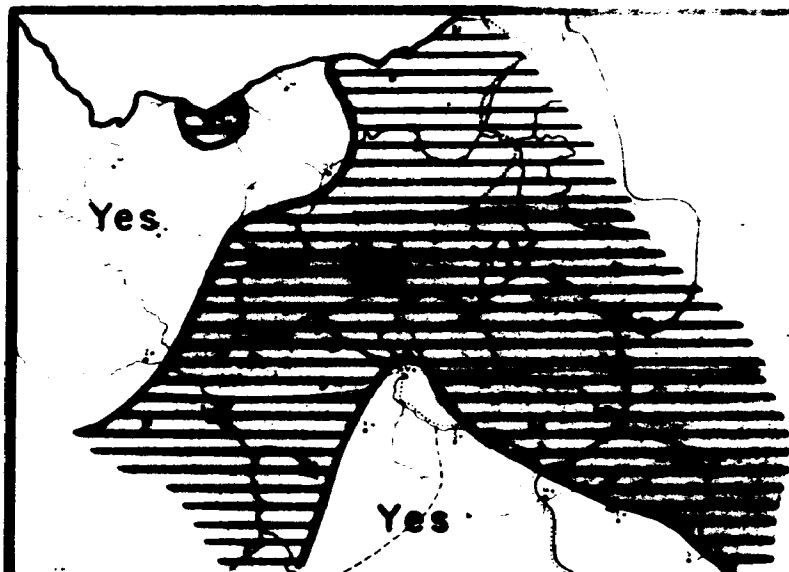


FIGURE 2:23. FAREL FOR ROSH HASHANAH



FIGURE 2:24 ROSEPROKIM



FIGURE 2:25 COMPOSITE OF FIGURES 2:23-2:24

"DIAGONAL" CHANNEL  
OF EXTINCTION

FIG. 2:25 Composite of Figs. 2:23 - 2:24

Similarity in the geographical patterns of the foregoing maps suggested that we superimpose them in the illustrated manner. While the resulting composites testify to the similarity in the distribution of their components, if all were superimposed, little would remain of the pattern so apparent in each. However, identity between any two patterns is beyond reasonable expectation; in any case, lack of identity does not detract from the unmistakable tendency that we have described, one that is distinct from all others, and is perhaps particularly important for the fact that it is reinforced over and over again by items that, generally speaking, have no functional relationship to one another.

In describing the spread and recession of Hasidism, we provided historical evidence for the efficacy of two-directional cultural pressures. The survival patterns resulted from innovating forces which actually introduced a new culture pattern (cf. Fig. 2:11), or simply eliminated an old one. These forces may be presumed to have issued from either the east or the west, or indeed from both.

The very discontinuity of the areas of extinction in Figs. 2:10 and 2:11 is presumptive evidence of the fact that the operative forces have flowed in both directions toward the accomplishment of the same end. The nature of the "horizontal" channel, on the other hand, does not permit us to specify whether the discontinuity of the retention areas in Fig. 2:16 is the result of bi-directional or uni-directional pressures.

It is otherwise in the case of the "diagonal" channel. The "funnel" effect, so apparent in Figs. 2:19 and 2:25, for example, can, it seems, only be interpreted as the result of the southwestward elimination of the depicted customs. The areas of extinction, in these cases, begin to narrow

at approximately the location of the isopleths of Fig. 2:4 and might easily suggest the breaching of a pre-existing boundary, represented in its fullest efficacy by this line of major SW/NE discontinuity. But it would be well to avoid jumping to conclusions of a chronological nature. The fact that the roughly dated border of Hasidism is part of this discontinuity does not in itself permit the inference that the breach in question actually post-dates the northeastward spread of Hasidism, or that it was related to the anti-Hasidic counter-movement.

We need assume no relationship in the distribution history of functionally unrelated items. It is therefore quite possible that the southwestward extinction of the customs portrayed above took place first, and the spread of Hasidism in the opposite direction came later. Historical factors consistent with this hypothesis are presented in Chapter 6.

An interesting inconsistency in the matching of the extinction patterns merits some comment. The large urban centers, Warsaw (Yid. Varše) and Brest (Yid. Brisk), are seen included alternately in the conservative areas and in the belt of "modernization". We might have expected these cities themselves to serve as the most immediate sources of modernizing influence in the area.<sup>15</sup>

## 2.22 Local Innovation

Local innovations are not easily distinguished from survivals

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<sup>15</sup> In describing Polish folk culture, Benet (1951:119) notes that ". . . though Warsaw is the center of learning it has not wrested from historic Krakow the title of culture center." Now it is by no means certain that Jews and Poles inhabiting the same geographical space, had the same cultural centers as well. Frequently the contrary was probably true. In the present instance, however, both Jewish and Polish evidence may point in common to the 'non-centrality' of Warsaw for both societies.

without recourse to historical data. To the best of our knowledge the examples presented here belong to the former category.

FIGS. 2:26-2:30 Local Hasidic Sects. None of the later, less influential Hasidic sects that have their seats within our area extend their influence beyond the limit of Hasidic families established in Figure 2:3. Though sects overlap in the east and in the west, it is of interest to note that the ranges of influence of the eastern and western groups, with respect to one another, are in complementary distribution (Fig. 2:30).

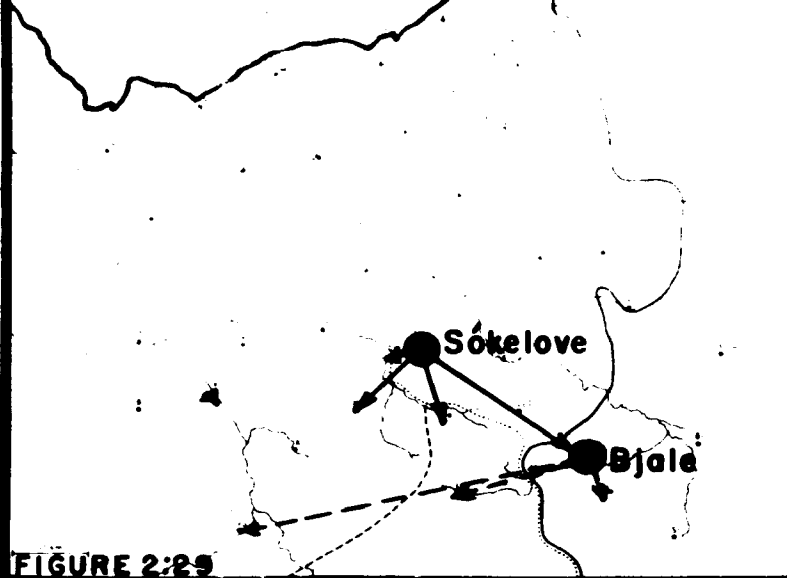
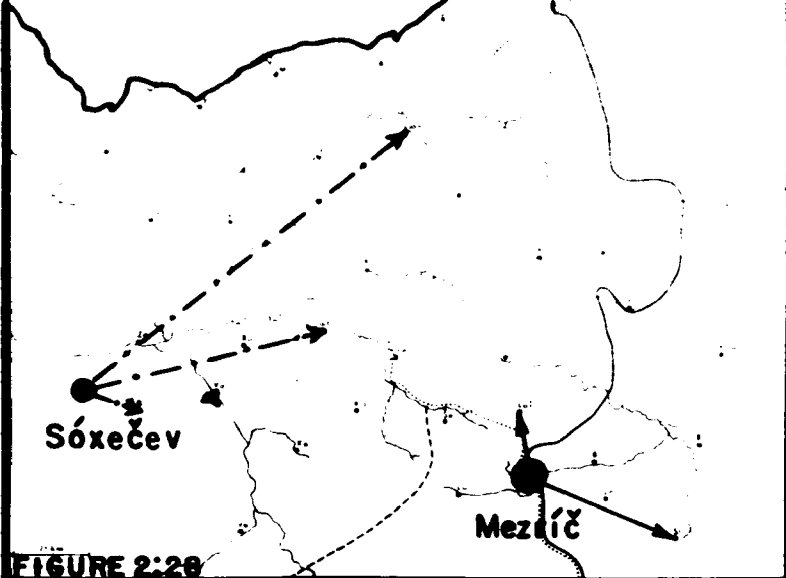
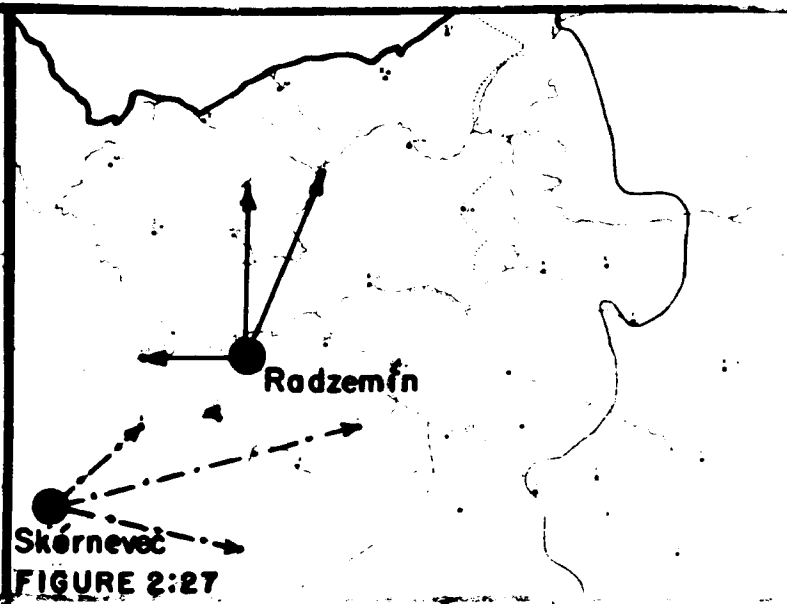
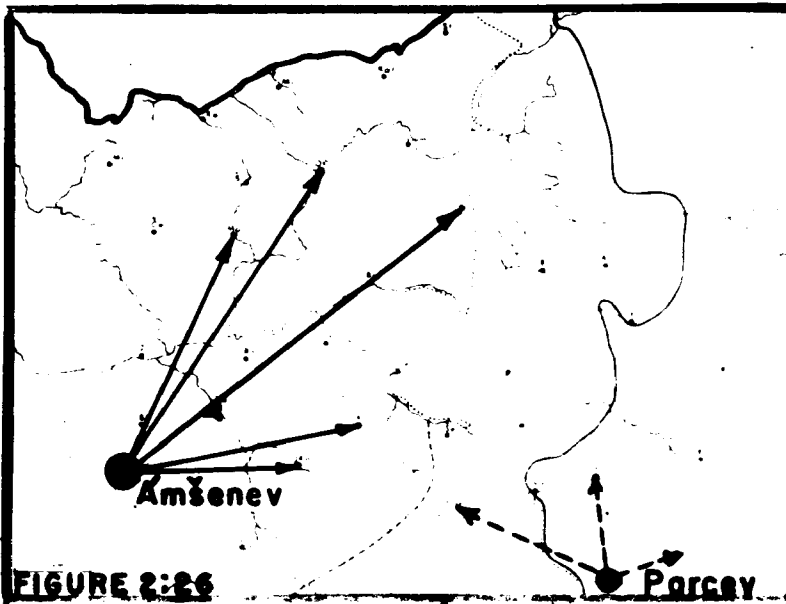
FIG 2:31 Holiday Loaves Decorated with a Hand. We have already described a wide variety of hallah ornaments (cf. Fig. 2:14). Shaping a hand in the dough in order to signify the renewal of friendship on the New Year is a custom restricted to the northern communities in our area. Though we cannot be certain, this appears to be an outcropping of Lithuanian Jewish influence.

FIG. 2:32 vikup. We know of only one previous reference to the custom gejn af vikup 'to go for vikup' (cf. Polish wykup 'redemption, ransom'). It stems from one of our own communities, Mlave, (Opatoshu 1941:156). To the informants from this and other northern towns it meant visiting relatives (grandparents and aunts) during the Passover holiday and receiving (generally colored) eggs from them. The association of colored eggs with Passover is more widespread than the name vikup, which appears to be a local innovation.<sup>16</sup>

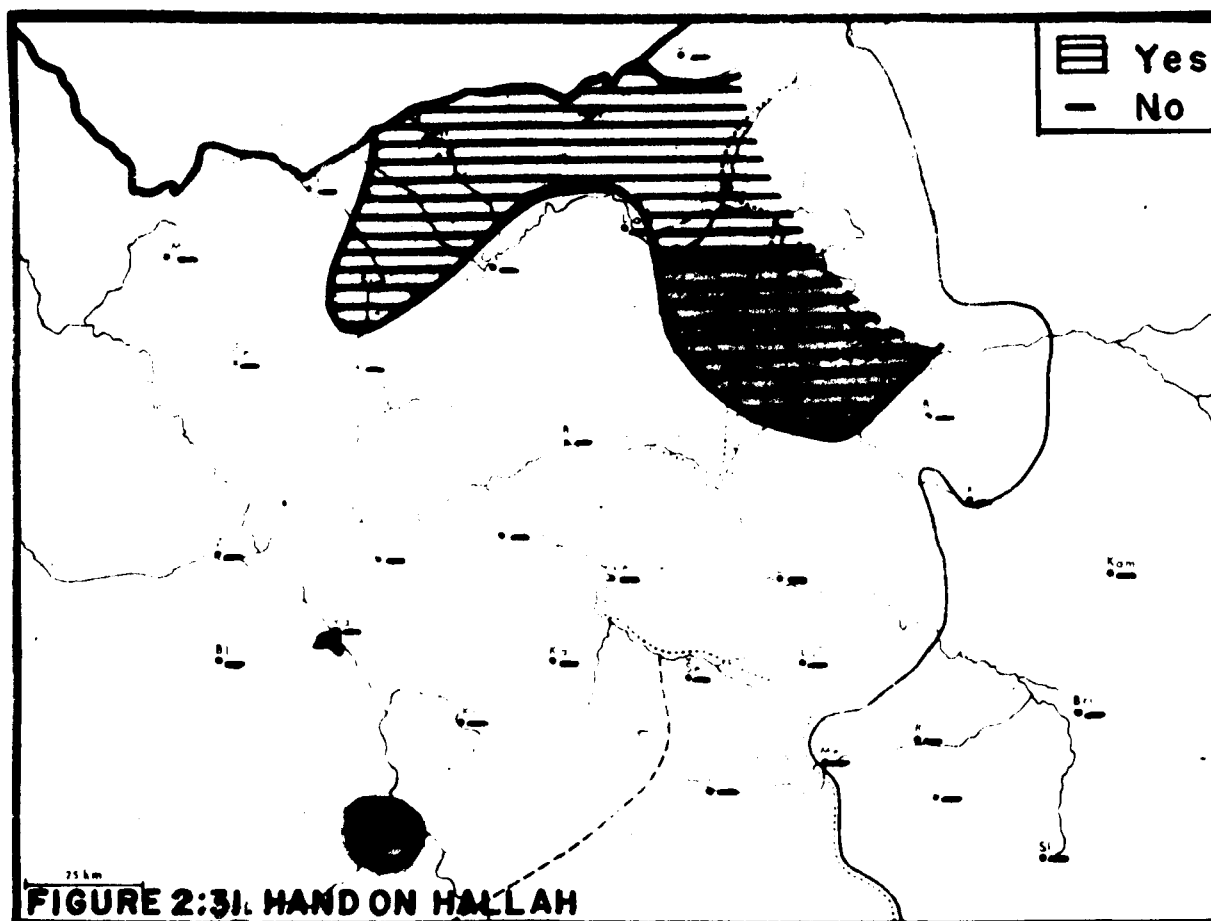
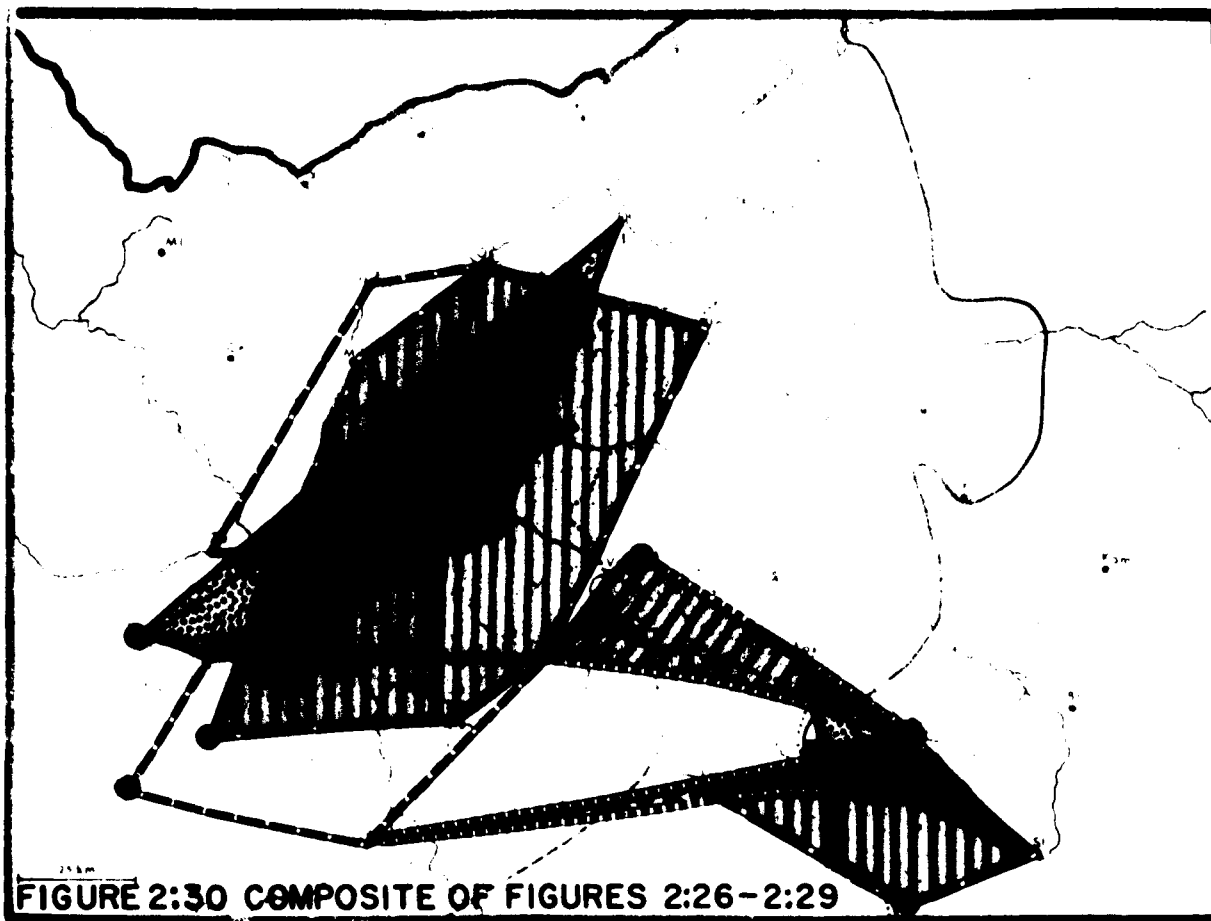
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<sup>16</sup> "A large quantity of eggs was used during Passover . . . boiled hard and eaten cold. . . . Tinted reddish-yellow in a decoction of onion skins, they appeal to children eager for variety" (Liliental 1914: I, 234).





**INFLUENCE OF MINOR HASIDIC SECTS**





Several of our informants also, or exclusively, associated colored eggs with Lag Beomer (a holiday occurring nearly five weeks after Passover) while still others, including two in the vikup area (one for whom the name was only a vague memory), considered colored eggs to be part of the Christian tradition only.<sup>17</sup>

If the use of colored eggs among Jews is in fact an outgrowth of the general Polish tradition, its loss over a wide area or its transfer to a holiday further removed from Easter is easily explained. It is more difficult, however, to decide whether vikup in particular has any Christian associations which prevented its transmission together with the activity to which it refers.<sup>18</sup>

### 2.3 Indices of Contact

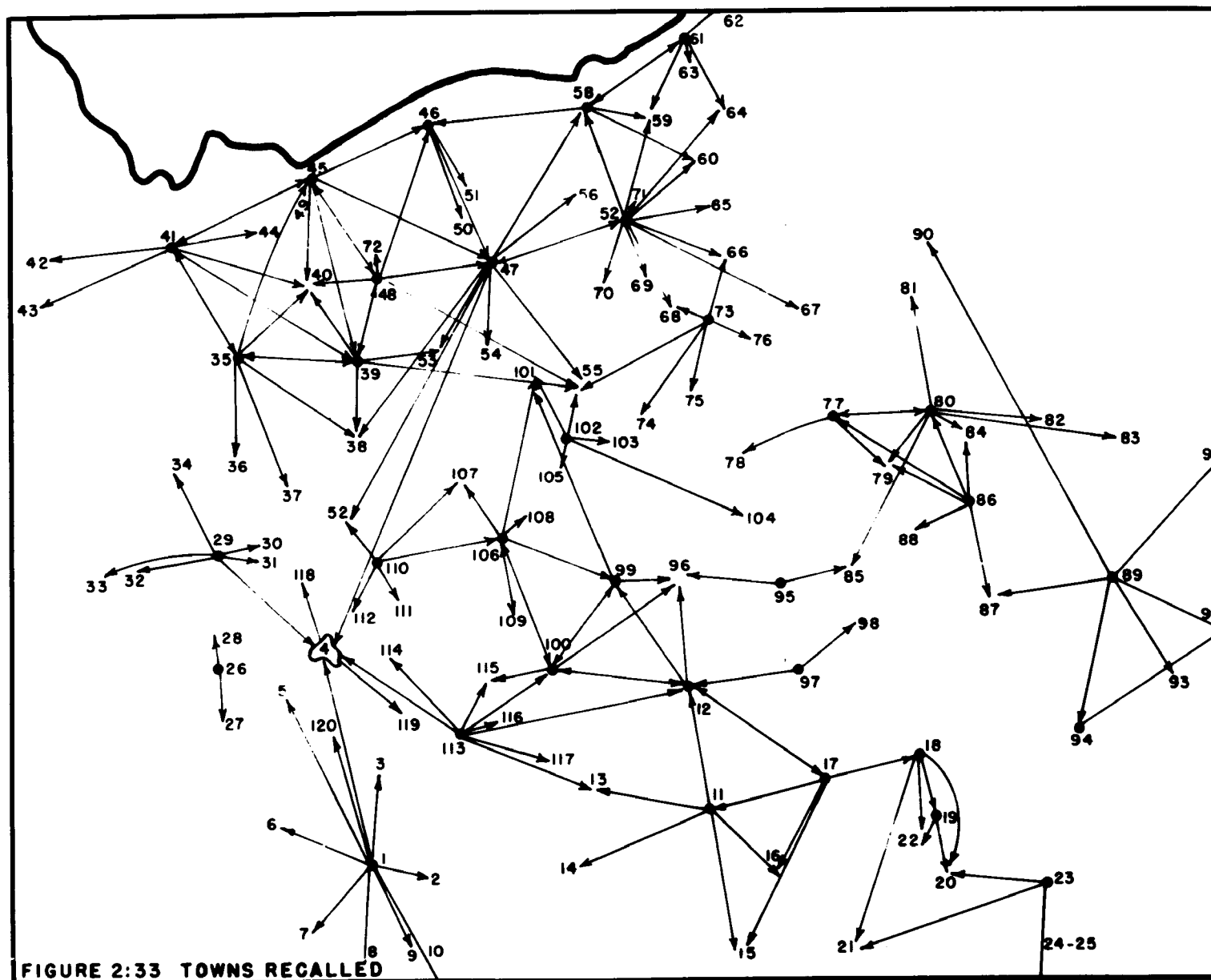
Differences in religious orientation were previously said to imply differences in social contact (cf. §2.1, Fig. 2:3). In the search for phenomena that more explicitly reflect such contact within the area, especially over short distances, every informant was asked to recall the names of the communities that surrounded his home town.

FIGS. 2:33-2:34 Towns Remembered. Whatever the accidental

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<sup>17</sup> Indeed "the practice of decorating Easter eggs [among the Polish peasants] . . . has been developed into an elaborate and complex art . . . reaching back to the 11th century and before. . . . [Here they are customarily] presented as gifts to godparents and to friends . . . not . . . to one's own parents or children . . . " (Benet 1951:50f.).

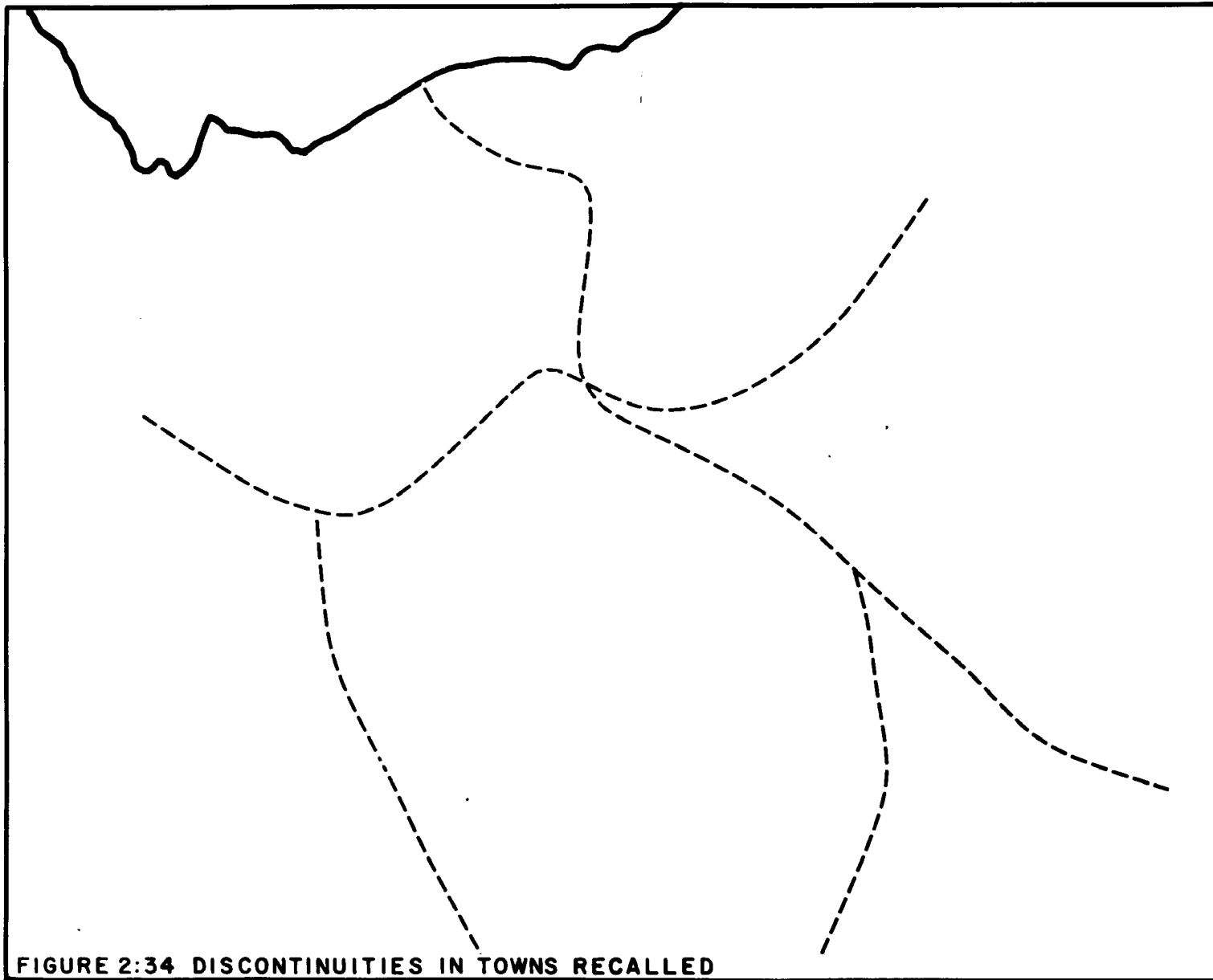
<sup>18</sup> Although he makes no reference to 'eggs' in this context, Theodor Gaster (1949:22) refers to the Passover "family meal and the sprinkling of blood . . . not so much [as] ceremonies of communion as of ransom."



factors that color individual response, it is apparent from Fig. 2:33, in which arrows have been drawn from the informant's community to those he recalled, that a consistent picture of the world of the shtetl emerges. The overriding impression is that even in relatively recent times communication in the area was not continuous. Communities cluster in relatively small groups. Some clusters, otherwise clearly separated, are joined by one or two individual links. If lines are drawn (as in Figure 2:34), both through the areas where groups fail to meet, and through the points where obvious clusters are linked by a single arrow, it is evident that the resultant areas are to a significant degree related to our important isopleths. Most apparent is the diagonal easternmost boundary to which we have referred repeatedly. The line running horizontally in the north is suggestive of the isopleth in Fig. 2:32, while the delimitation of northwest, northeast and southeast corners will require little more support than it receives in Chapter 3. The westernmost vertical line is also clearly reflected in the evidence to follow, though it will be seen more frequently to extend even further north. On the whole it will be increasingly apparent that the areas defined by these boundaries are far from accidental.

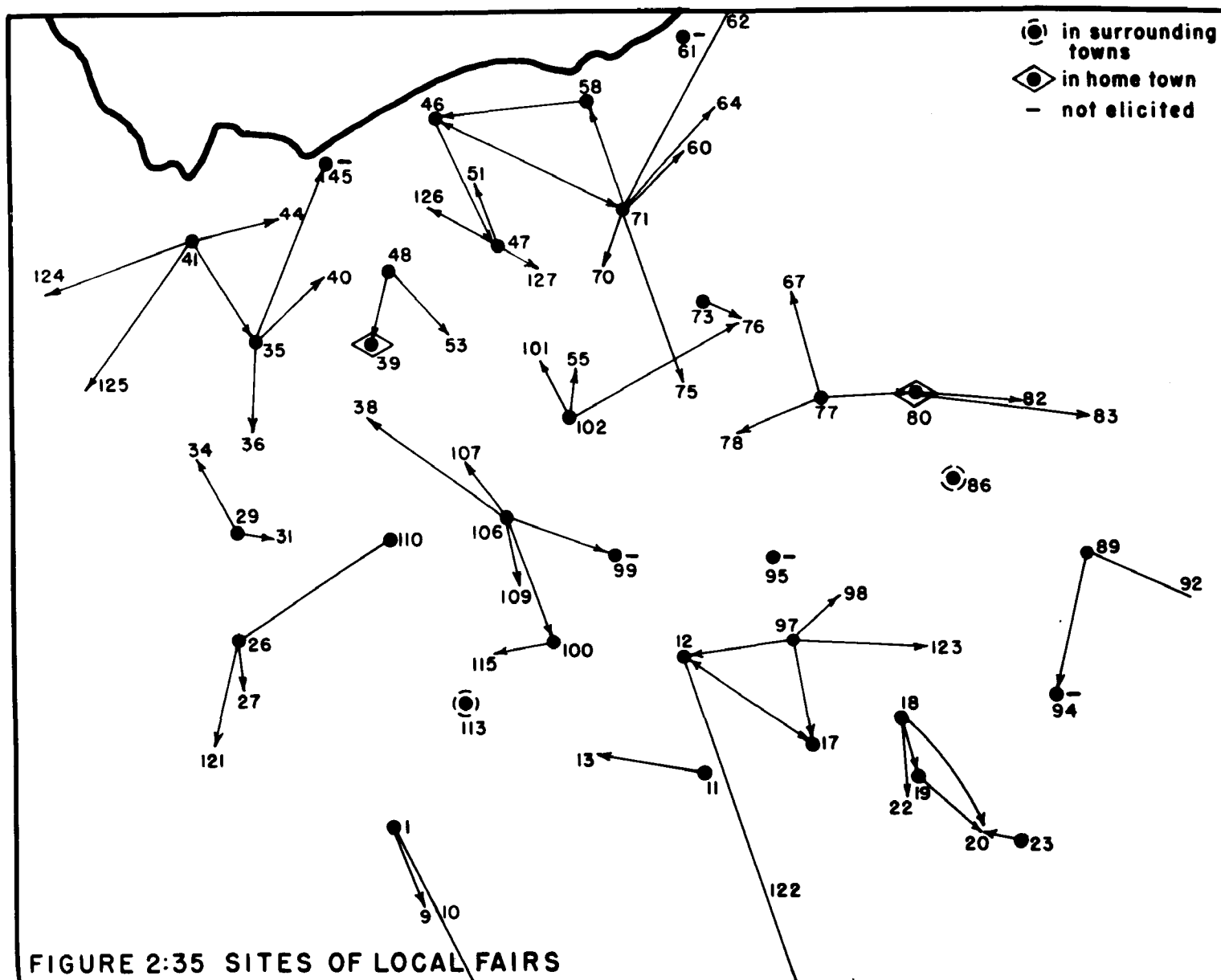
FIG. 2:35 The Sites of Local Fairs. The sites of the weekly, monthly, and annual fairs which our informants recall their townsfolk having attended, bear out the implications of Fig. 2:34. We note that in some cases, direct contacts extended well beyond those implied in the earlier figure, but these do nothing to change the relationships among the sample towns themselves.

The patterns described here may be presumed to reflect the most



recent articulation of our area and perhaps to govern the flow of the most recent innovations within it. Yet it will be shown in Chapter 6 that some of these "lines of isolation" are, in fact, of considerable antiquity.





Key to Figs. 2:33 and 2:35

- 1) Vorke [vurka] 2) Mágnešev 3) Ger 4) Varše 5) Pečáč 6) Grice
- 7) Bžálebžek 8) Rodem [rúdam] 9) Glóvečev 10) Kóženec 11) Lúkeve  
[lúkeve] 12) Šedlec 13) Stock 14) Zélexev 15) Kock 16) Radzín
- 17) Mezříč 18) Bjale 19) Lomás 20) Višnec 21) Parcev 22) Rešóš
- 23) Slávetič 24) Vlodeve 25) Xelem 26) Blojne 27) Gródžesk 28) Lešne
- 29) Zakrečín 30) Pónexev 31) Nóvedvor 32) Červínsk 33) Višegrod
- 34) Plinsk 35) Čéxenove 36) Najštot [ná(n)štut] 37) Naščílsk
- 38) Pultúsk [pítísk] 39) Mákeve 40) Prušnic [prušnec] 41) Mlave
- 42) Zoremín 43) Bezojn 44) Ščégeve 45) Xoržl 46) Mišnec 47) Ostrelenke
- 48) Šilc 49) Grábeve 50) Díleve 51) Kádzedle 52) Brock 53) Režán
- 54) Góverove 55) Óstreve 56) Novegrod 57) Lomze 58) Kol'ne
- 59) Stávesk 60) Jedvabne 61) Stučín 62) Gráj(e)ve 63) Vónseš
- 64) Radžíleve 65) Vizne 66) Rutke 67) Sekóle 68) Zambrev 69) Červone
- 70) Šnádeve 71) Pjontnece 72) Drónževe 73) Jáblenke 74) Zaremb
- 75) Čiževe 76) Visóke-Mazovjéck 77) Brajnsk 78) Čéxenovce 79) Botke
- 80) Bilsk 81) Zabluždeve 82) Gájnefke 83) Bjáleveš 84) Orle
- 85) Šemjatič 86) Kleščél 87) Visóke-Litóvsk 88) Melejčeš
- 89) Kámenec-Litóvsk 90) Bjál(e)stok 91) Prúžene 92) Kobrín 93) Žábenke
- 94) Brisk 95) Drohečín 96) Sókelove 97) Lóšec 98) Senake 99) Věngreve
- 100) Kalešín 101) Stok 102) Brok 103) Malkín 104) Zěmbreve 105) Sáděvne
- 106) Jádeve 107) Viškeve 108) Loxev 109) Dobre 110) Radzemín
- 111) Volemín 112) Markes 113) Kólebjel 114) Mólese 115) Minsk
- 116) Šenec 117) Látevič 118) Jablone 119) Otfóck 120) Pjasečne
- 121) Ámšenev 122) Lublín 123) Jáneve 124) Šeps 125) Drobnín 126) Bárneve
- 127) Tristín

## CHAPTER 3

### THE LEXICON

#### 3.0 Preliminary Considerations

##### 3.01 Types of Lexical Maps

Lexical maps are ordinarily of two kinds: onomasiological and semasiological.<sup>1</sup> Onomasiological maps depict a variety of designations for a particular referent, while semasiological maps display the variety of meanings assigned to a given lexical item.

This duality is a natural consequence of the role of the word as a link between a unit of expression and a unit of content. But if a form has more than one meaning, the semasiological question immediately implies a further onomasiological question, and vice versa. Even a minimum of structural sophistication therefore places lexicological questions into an "implicational chain." U. Weinreich has argued (1954:399) that by superimposing the maps of such an "implicational chain," we may obtain "the 'structural corrective' to a traditional dialect map". The isoglosses in the composite map would divide mutually exclusive sets of semantically interrelated words rather than isolated items.

Cognizant of the theoretical merits of this position, we have tried to introduce this 'structural corrective' into some of our analyses. The results of our effort will be more appropriately considered in Chapter 7. We anticipate that discussion by noting that the consistent use of this

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<sup>1</sup>For a fuller discussion, see Jaberg (1936:44).

approach would only have been possible at the expense of considerable perspicuity.

In addition to the conventional ~~onomasiological~~ map, we have employed a sub-type which is not involved in any implicational chain. The prompted words that make up this category are, as a rule, unstructured parts of the vocabulary not easily elicited by any onomasiological question of the form "What did you call X?" These are words known from the literature to be of limited distribution and are assumed to be invariable in meaning; as in every other case, our object is to determine the geographical limits of each. While other maps may reveal semantically distinct areas, the isogloss in the variety in question divides areas characterized by the presence or absence of the prompted word. For convenience we refer to these as "occurrence" maps.

In presenting the data we have made no reference to differences in the manner of eliciting each response. The reader, however, can easily assign most of the illustrations to one or another of the described categories.

### 3.02 Lexicalized vs. Phonological Phenomena

Some of the items included in this chapter might also have lent themselves to classification under ~~other~~ headings. Our decisions in these cases were based on the view that variation in the phonological (or grammatical) shape of a word that could not be formulated systematically (i.e. without reference to particular examples), should be treated as "merely" lexical problems (e.g. cvancik/cvoncik 'twenty', kamen/kemen 'to comb', etc.).

### 3.03 Grouping of Lexical Items

In grouping our lexical material for presentation we have been guided primarily by geographic considerations. The etymological distinctions among Yiddish words of Germanic and Hebrew-Aramaic (HA) origin have been ignored as irrelevant.<sup>1a</sup> Our results will testify to the validity of this approach (cf. §7.1).

For reasons apparent from our discussion in §1.2, the Slavic component of Yiddish vocabulary will, however, be given separate treatment in the present chapter.

### 3.04 Order of Presentation

Again we will begin by examining the evidence reflecting the dynamics of the major SW/NE discontinuity (§3.1). The rich lexical materials permit us to do so on an amplified scale. A discussion of other geographical patterns follows (§3.2), and we conclude the chapter with a consideration of the effects of the coteritoriality of Yiddish with the Slavic languages (§3.3).

#### 3.1 The Major SW/NE Discontinuity

Many lexical isoglosses divide the Yiddish east from the west in our area. Among the regional variants, at least one may usually be distinguished as an innovation and the direction of change determined.

Subsequent references to "innovations diffusing eastward" imply only that the items in question are of western origin. Those "diffusing westward" originate in the east. We do not intend to suggest that actual diffusion in either direction is necessarily occurring at the present time.

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<sup>1a</sup> We use the term "Germanic," despite its overly broad connotations, in order to avoid repetition of the awkward circumlocution "(not necessarily Standard) German". To use the term German, alone, might erroneously imply the Standard language.

Conversely, the present limits of any innovation may represent a retreat from a formerly more advanced location. Furthermore, the line between particular alternants may simply be a static one.

### 3.11 Innovations Diffusing Eastward

FIG. 3:1 'TO GIVE'. In all present-tense forms, the verb gebn 'to give' has [e] in the west and [i] in the east. Historically both paradigms must be considered innovations. In the east the development is simply the result of analogical leveling (cf. MHG pres. sg. gib, gibst, gibt, vs. pl. gēben).<sup>2</sup> The western forms, however, though also the result of analogical leveling, represent the irregular phonological development as well; the infinitive here is gej(b)n, and the diphthong [ej] rather than [e] would, accordingly, have been expected in the present tense, too.

Given the fact of innovation both in the east and in the west, it is difficult to determine the relative novelty of one or another of the changes. The added complexity of the western development, however,

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<sup>2</sup> Hereafter we frequently compare Yiddish words with forms attested in Middle High German. The reader, however, should be cautioned against inferring that the MHG word is the proto-form of its Yiddish cognate. References like 'MHG' or 'cf. MHG,' taken from Lexer (1962) unless otherwise noted, must be understood in the broadest sense, as indications that the Yiddish words to which they are related are of Germanic origin. The state of Yiddish etymological research often does not permit more precise references.

Slavic forms are derived from a variety of dictionaries listed in the Bibliography or cited in the text. While the specialist in Slavic linguistics will find many of our references and citations superfluous (since they deal with data which he assumes as "given"--frequently in sources that predate the quoted work), it is our intention simply to supply the non-specialist with an authoritative reference for the Slavic forms and for assertions concerning developments in the Slavic languages which have a bearing on our own discussion.

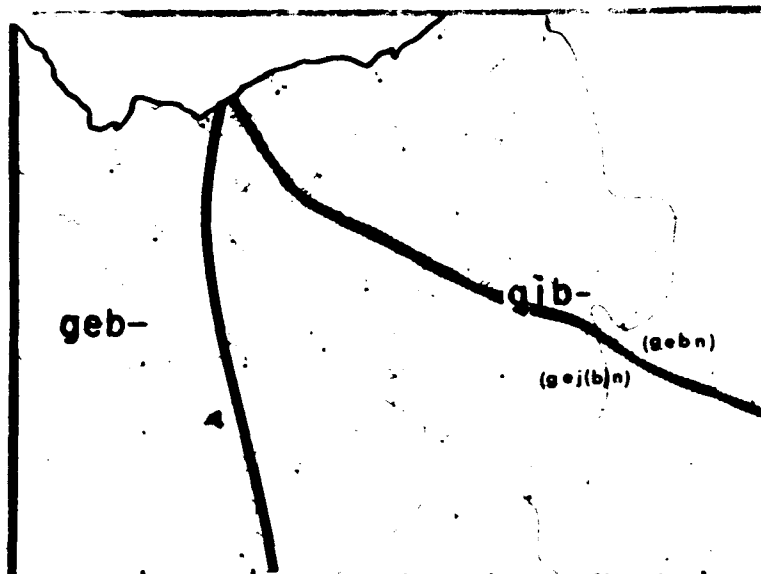


FIG. 3:1 'to give' Present Stem (and Infinitive)

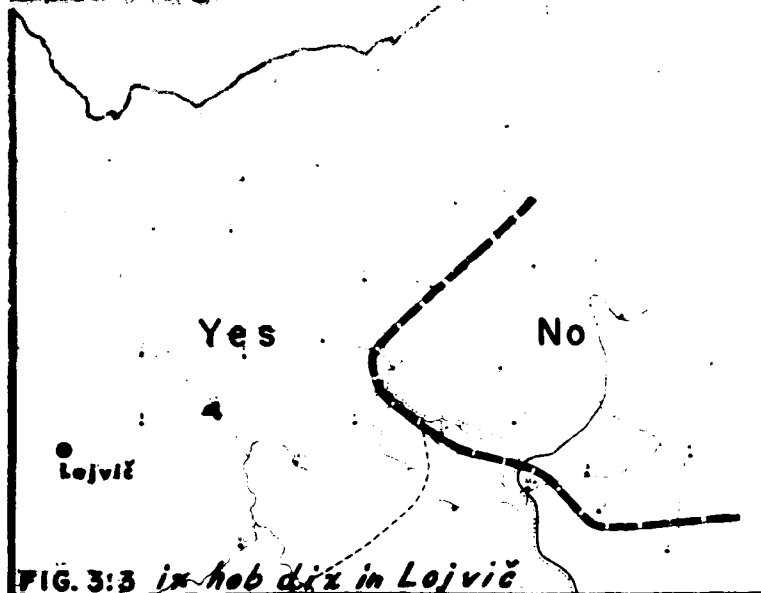


FIG. 3:3 *ix hob dix* in Lojvič

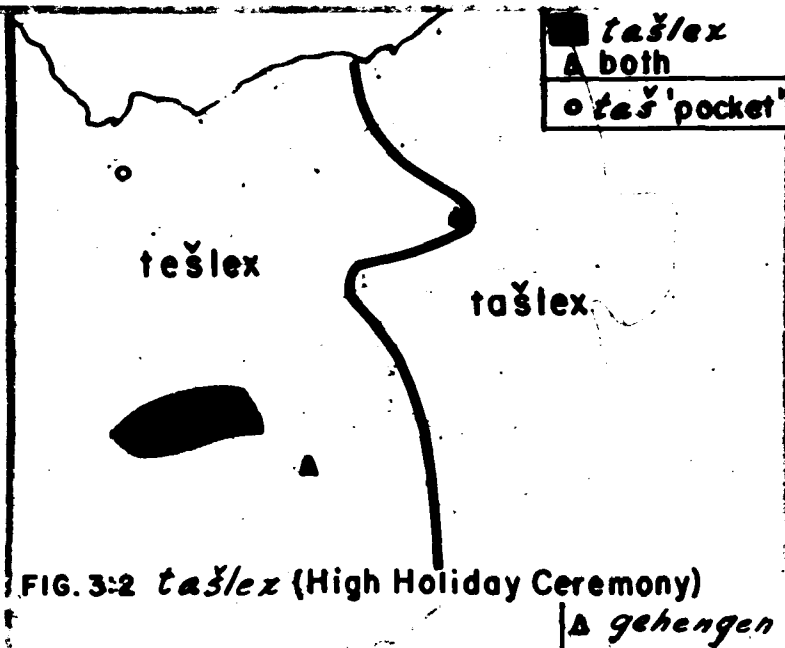


FIG. 3:2 *tašlex* (High Holiday Ceremony)

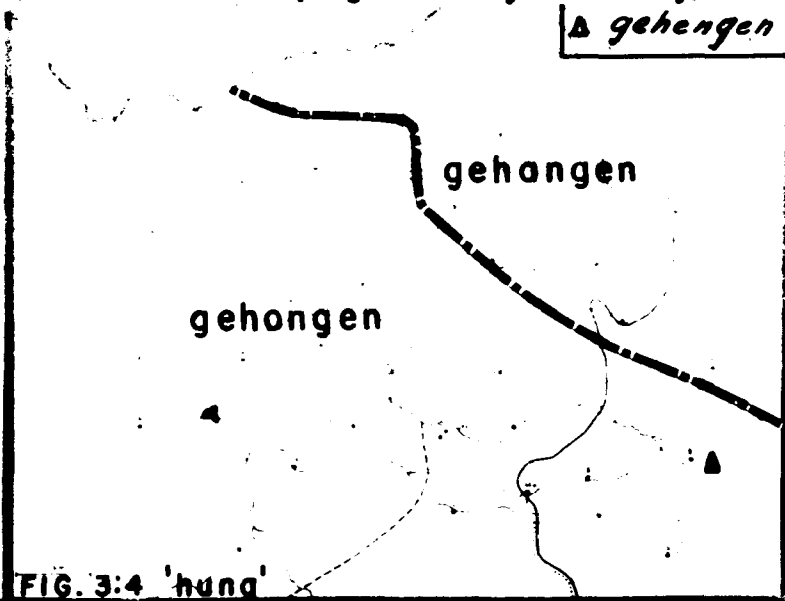


FIG. 3:4 'hung'

may permit the suggestion that it was the later one. This suggestion is reinforced somewhat by the memory of the informant from Mlave who recalls that in his childhood the older people used the present stem gib-.

FIG. 3:2 tašlex. During the High Holiday period the townsfolk repaired to the river nearby in order to cleanse themselves of their sins--this, symbolically, by emptying their pockets into the water. The ceremony generally goes by the name of the accompanying prayer which begins with the word tašlīx (HA tashlikh 'thou shalt cast out'). The observed variation in the name of the ceremony, tešlex/tašlex, appears to be the result of an association with 'pockets'. Though kéšene 'pocket' (Pol. kieszén) is almost universal in the area, the Germanic form taš (dim. pl. tešlex) appears in three widely separated communities (cf. Fig. 3:2) and more frequently, to the west of our area. Since it is only in the formation of noun plurals and diminutives that the alternation [a ~e] can be explained, it is probable that the original name of the ceremony was identified with tešlex 'pockets' in the west and persisted even in the area where the latter form was subsequently eliminated.

FIG. 3:3 ix hob dix in Lojvič. The town Lojvič (Pol. Lowicz) is located some 60 kilometers to the southwest of Warsaw. In many of the surrounding communities its name enters into the expression ix hob dix in "X" 'I consign you to "X"' (approxim. 'to hell with you'). Though a similar expression is used in other communities as well, the "X" (i.e. 'hell') varies regionally.

FIG. 3:4 'HUNG'. Of the alternant past participles of the verb hengen 'to hang (vt., vi.)' (MHG hangen vi., hengen vt.), the western form gehongen (eastern gehangen) appears to be the innovation if only because,



in this case, as in a handful of other lexical items whose variants are distinguished by the geographically inconsistent alternation of [a] and [o], only the [a] forms are historically attested in Yiddish and in German. Perhaps the fact that the vowel in question is nearly always followed by a nasal (cf. Figs. 3:19, 3:31, 3:37 [4], 3:38 [5], 3:43) is evidence of an old, positionally determined sound change which yielded [o] < [a]. If so, there remains to account for both the many negative instances and for the irregular distribution of both the [a] and [o] alternants.

We will see below that a large number of isoglosses lie at different locations between the extremes illustrated in Figs. 3:1 and 3:4. Is there something in the nature of the lexical items themselves that determines the extent to which the innovations are diffused in one direction or another? Frings' classic explanation (cf. Aubin 1926:115ff.), that the differential range of distribution of the cluster -ks- in the German words sechs/Ochsen/wachsen 'six, oxen, to grow' (as against sess/Ossen/wassen) depended on the decreasing "market value" of the words in this series, is inapplicable in our case. If any single factor can be isolated in respect to the spread of the Yiddish lexical innovations, it is more apt to concern their "emotional value". Although we would hesitate to propose a scale of "emotionality," it appears, from the data examined, that the more emotionally charged items are among the most widely dispersed.

More relevant to our interests, however, is the fact, that within the dispersal area, lexical isoglosses do in fact cluster considerably.

### 3.11.1 Lexical Isogloss 1.

FIG. 3:5 motlen 'TO GOSSIP' (cf. MHG martern, marteln 'to torment', an etymology proposed in a personal communication from Max Weinreich). Note that almost all occurrences are restricted to the Southern Yiddish variants [mutlən/mütln] (cf. below §5.12.3).

FIG. 3:6 al'ker '(BED)ROOM' (Pol. alkierz 'alcove').

FIG. 3:7 Composite of Figs. 3:4-3:6. The forms al'ker and gehongen may serve as chronological indices. Both are general in SEY. They must have, therefore, already been current in Polish Yiddish in the 16th century when southeastward migrations from Poland led to the settlement of the Jewish communities in the Ukraine.

### 3.11.2 Lexical Isogloss 2.

FIG. 3:8 kamer '(BED)ROOM'/STORE-ROOM' (cf. MHG kamer(e)). In §7.33.1 we examine the structural implications of the data in Figs. 3:6, 3:8.

FIG. 3:9 pløjšn (SY [plōšn/ploušn]) 'TO CHATTER' (Bav.-Austr. plauschen; cf. Kluge s.v.).

FIG. 3:10 ja(j)(n)des 'CONSCIENCE' (HA yahaduth 'Judaism').

FIG. 3:11 sojves 'SHROUDS' (< \*sójve sg. < HA sovev 'to circle?'). The universal alternant taxrixim 'shrouds' is also of HA origin.

FIG. 3:12 Composite of Figs. 3:8-3:11.

### 3.11.3 Lexical Isogloss 3.

FIG. 3:13 'HANNUKAH TOP'. The basic designations for the 'spinning top' with which children and grown-ups amuse themselves during the mid-winter Hannukah festival are drejdl (cf. MHG drejen 'to turn') and trendl/trender (MHG trendel 'top'). The latter are among the rare

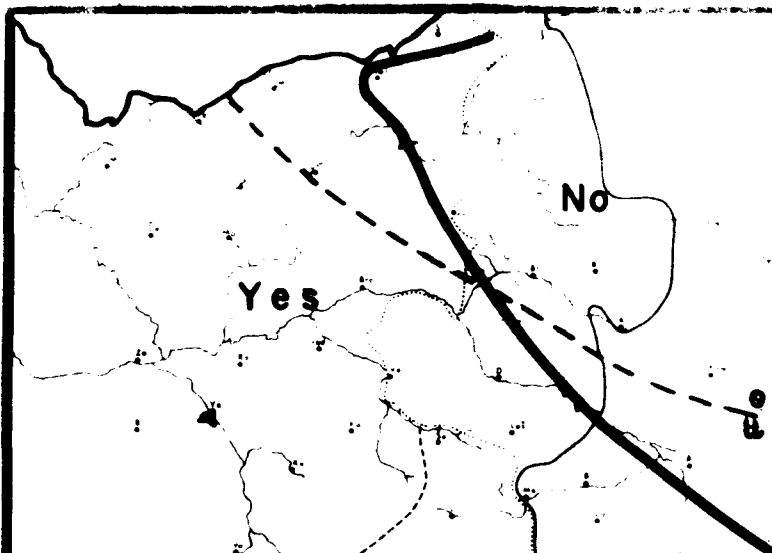


FIG. 3:5 *mot/en* 'to gossip'

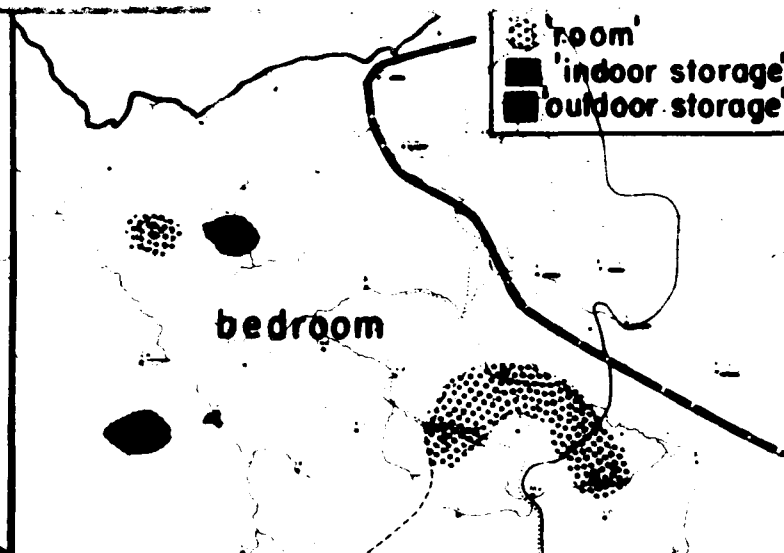


FIG. 3:6 *al'ker* 'bedroom'

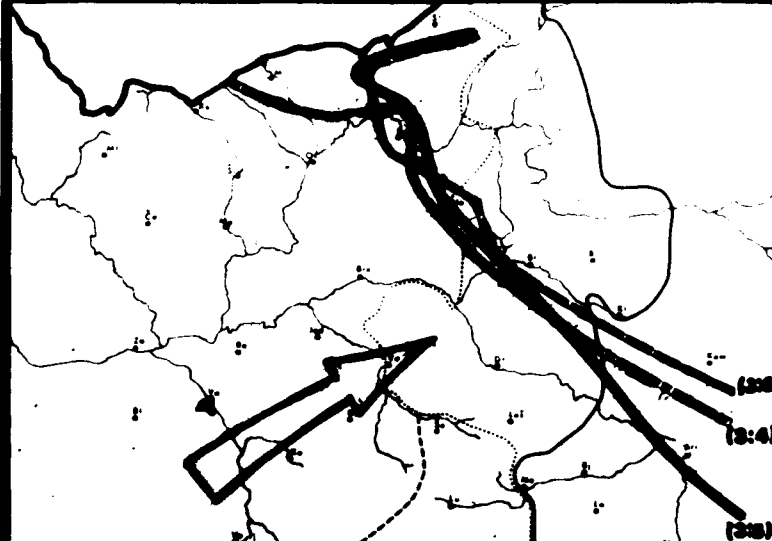
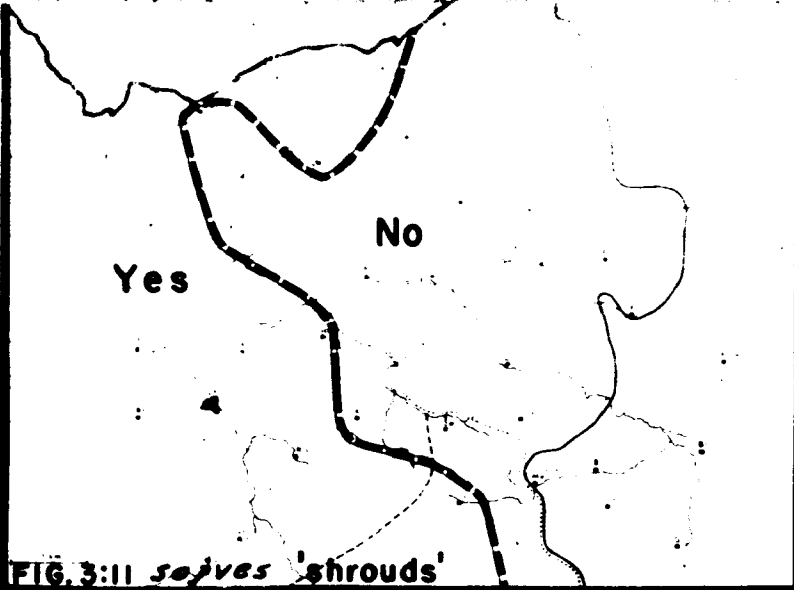
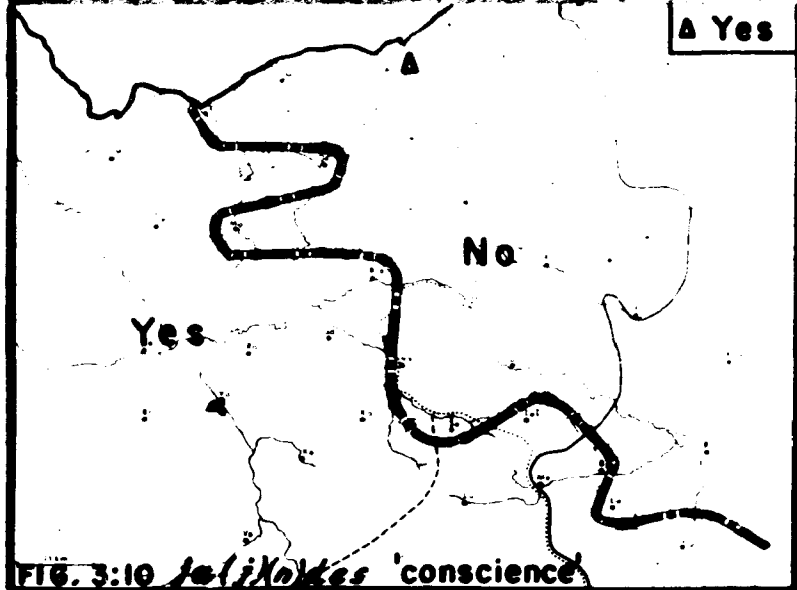
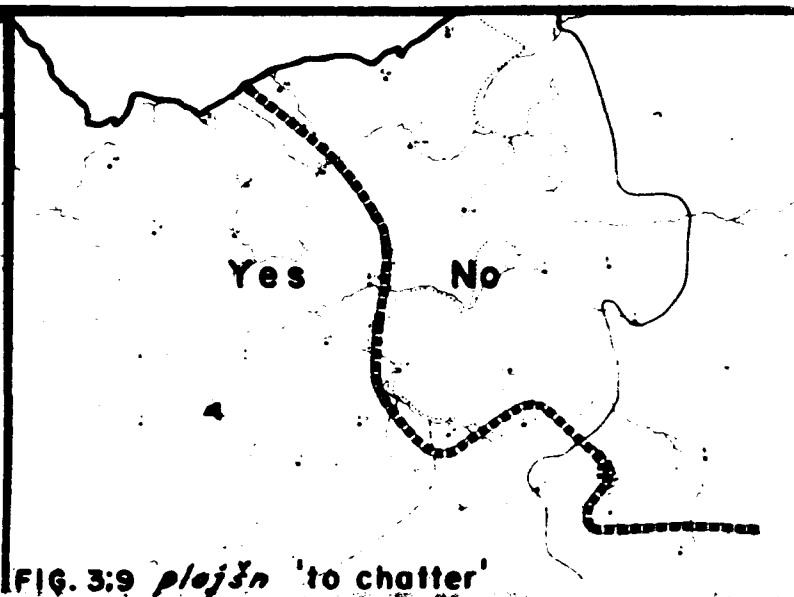
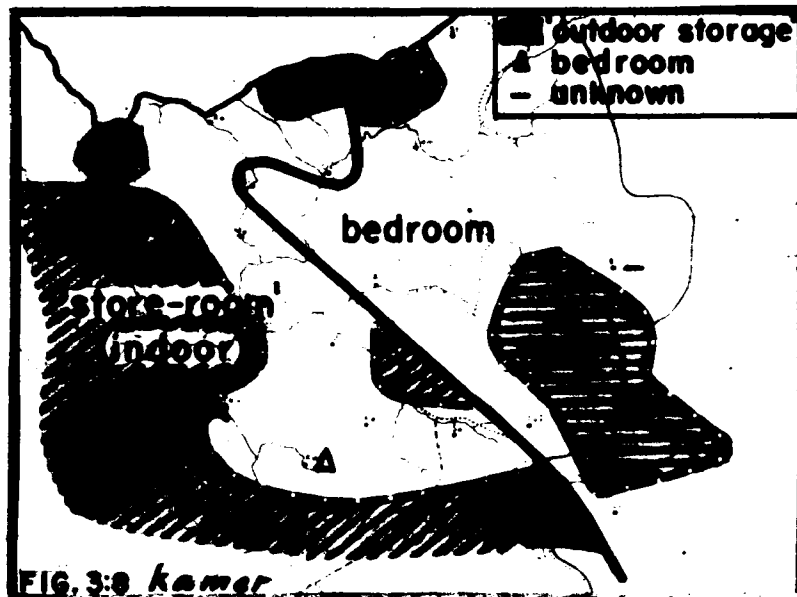
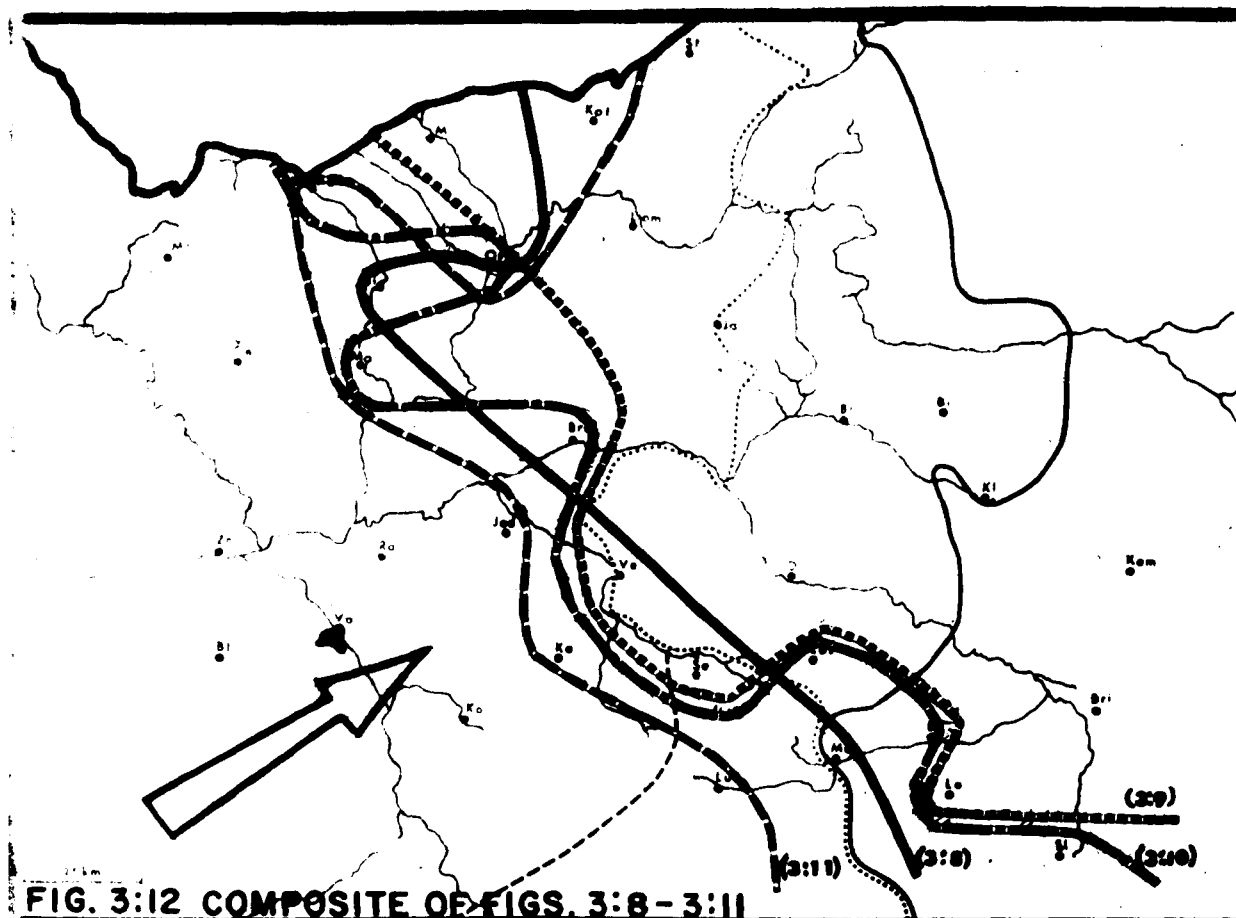


FIG. 3:7 COMPOSITE OF FIGS. 3:4, 3:5, 3:6

INNOVATIONS DIFFUSING EASTWARD:  
LEXICAL ISOGLOSS 1





## INNOVATIONS DIFFUSING EASTWARD:

## LEXICAL ISOGLOSS 2

vestiges of Western Yiddish in the east.<sup>3</sup> The apparent compromise drejderl should be compared with the forms in §3.13.2.

The form rejdl for 'top' has several interesting implications. Where it occurs it also functions as the diminutive of [rud] (Std. Yid. rod) 'wheel'. It could have developed only to the west of the isogloss that distinguishes [rejdl/redl] 'small wheel' (cf. Fig. 5:26), and to the east of the boundary between [drajdl/drejdl] 'top' (cf. Fig. 5:20). Within this well defined area, its emergence was probably stimulated by a change in the gender of rod 'wheel' from neuter to both feminine and masculine (cf. Fig. 4:10).<sup>4</sup> The reduction of unstressed vowels to [ə] would then have yielded feminine [dərejdl] 'the small wheel'. The loss of final r or simply the merger of two r's in succession would result in masculine [derejdl]. Subsequent metanalysis of what was presumed to be a definite article in drejdl 'top', a common phenomenon in Yiddish, would have produced the current form rejdl 'top'.

FIG. 3:14 'YOU (oblique plural)'. The alternation between enk (MHG [Bav.] enk) and ajx (MHG iuch) 'you (obl. pl.)' may be the result of internal Jewish migrations in Germany itself, or of migrations into Eastern Europe from different parts of Germany. The western form enk is clearly of Bavarian origin. It is conceivable that the Standard Yiddish alternant ajx had already covered the entire area before the spread of enk supplanted it in the west.

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<sup>3</sup>Uriel Weinreich (1962a:21) previously noted the prevalence of these WY forms in the region south of the Carpathians and in southern Germany.

<sup>4</sup>Diminutives in -l, always neuter in Standard Yiddish, assume the gender of the underlying noun in areas where the neuter has been eliminated.

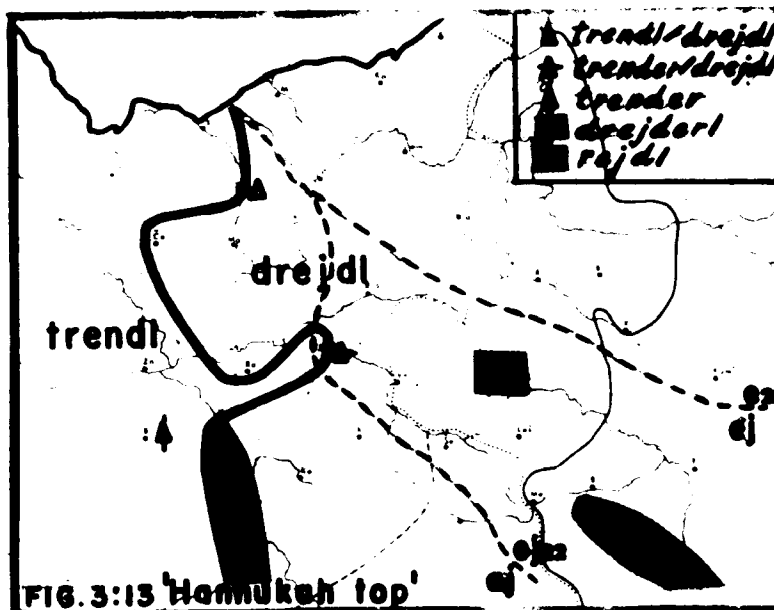


FIG. 3:13 'Hannukkah top'

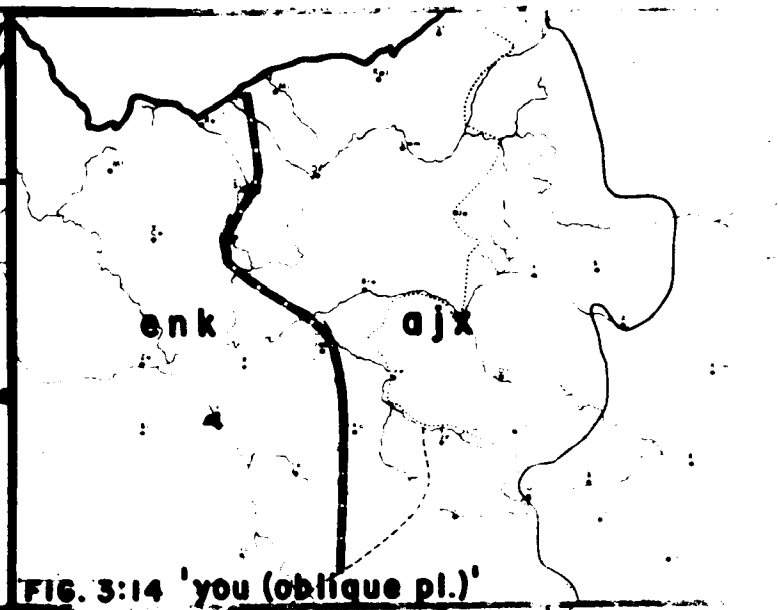


FIG. 3:14 'you (oblique pl.)'

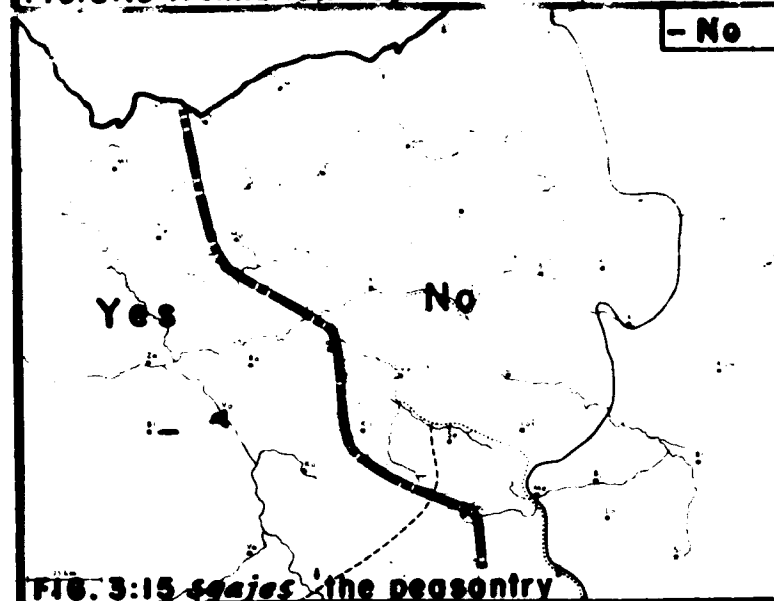


FIG. 3:15 series 'the peasontry'

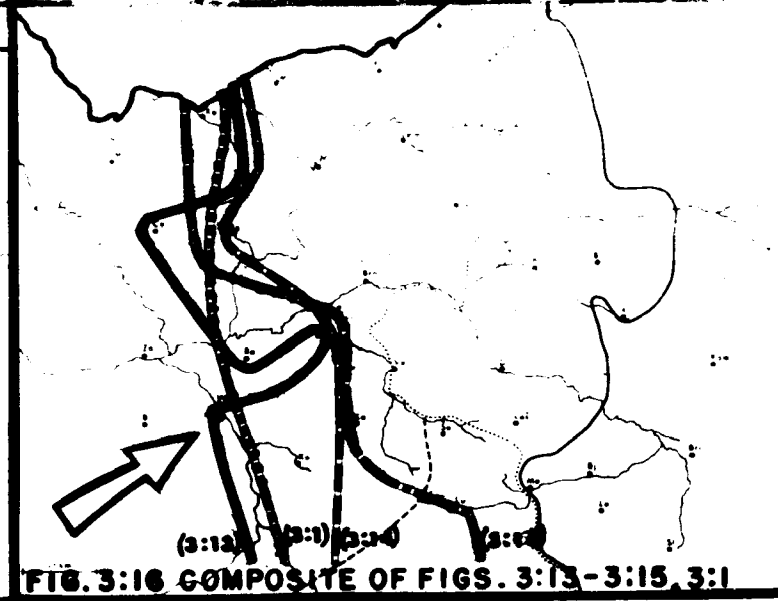


FIG. 3:16 COMPOSITE OF FIGS. 3:13-3:15, 3:1

INNOVATIONS DIFFUSING EASTWARD: LEXICAL ISOGLOSS 3

FIG. 3:15 sgajes 'THE PEASANTRY' (cf. goj 'peasant, gentile', HA 'gentile'). The initial s- in sgajes is all that remains of the original neuter article dos. The word itself appears to be a Yiddish innovation, constructed of morphemes derived from HA (goj + -es < Ashkenazic Hebrew -us < HA-uth). On the productivity of this innovating process see Y. Mark (1958:143ff.).

FIG. 3:16 Composite of Figs. 3:1, 3:14-3:16.

The foregoing descriptions provide cumulative evidence of a fundamental linguistic discontinuity between east and west. In naming two of the cumulative borders Isogloss 1 and 2, we have taken account of their proximity to the phonological isoglosses similarly designated in §1.3 (cf. also Figs. 5:14, 5:20). Isogloss 3 appears here for the first time. The correspondence between Isogloss 1 and the bundle of non-verbal isopleths in Fig. 2:4 is also inescapable.

### 3.12 Innovations Diffusing Westward

There appear to be fewer lexical innovations originating in the east, although the number illustrated below will be further supplemented in §3.32.1.

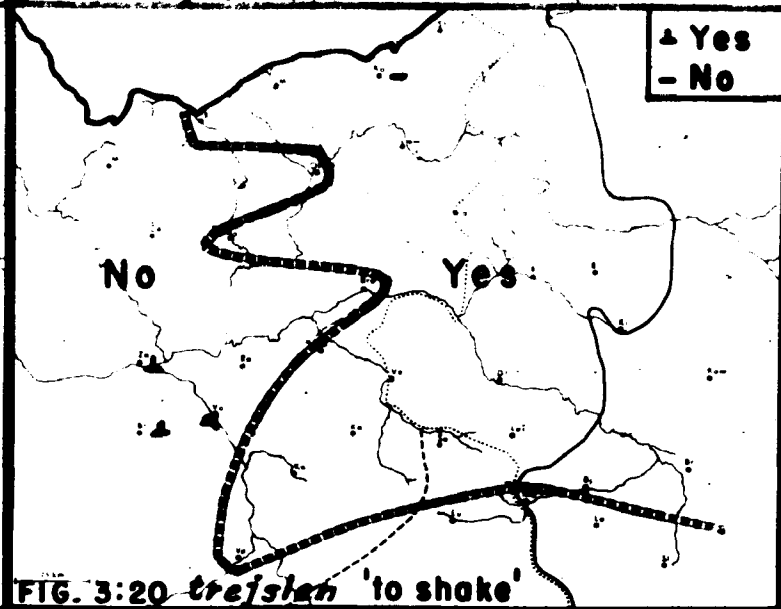
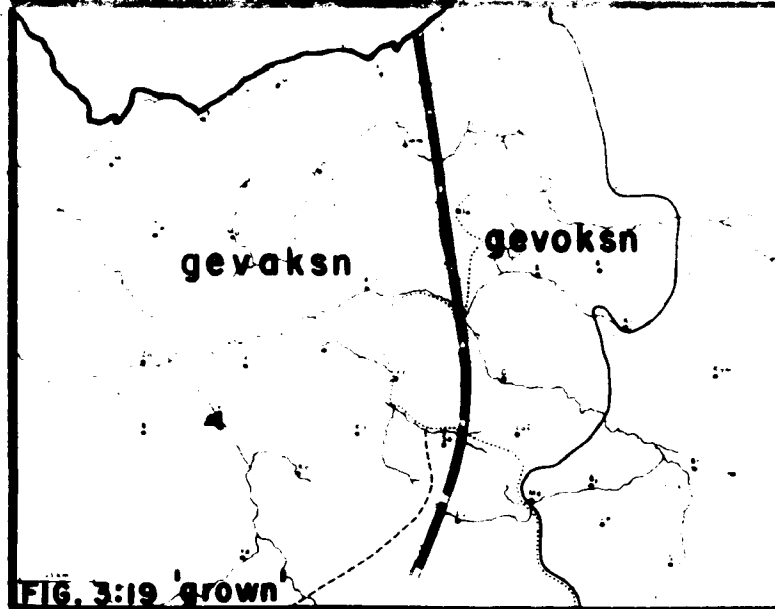
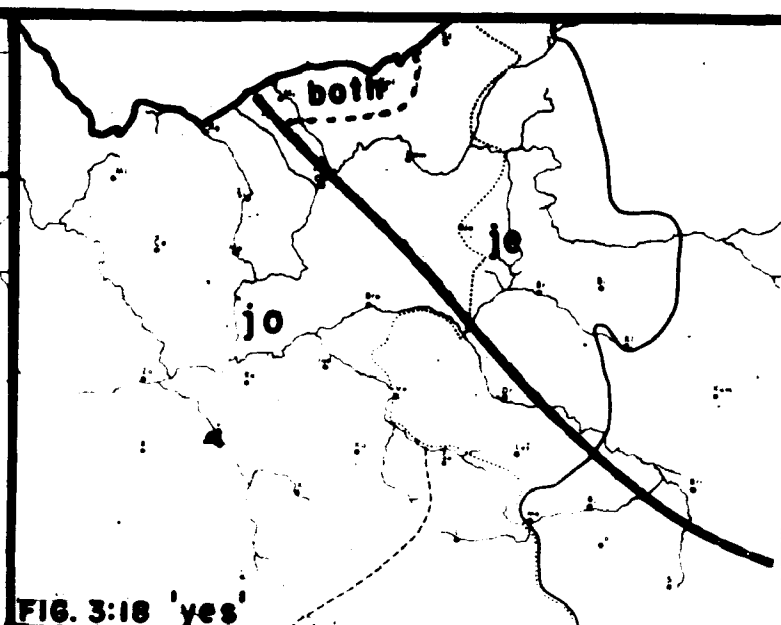
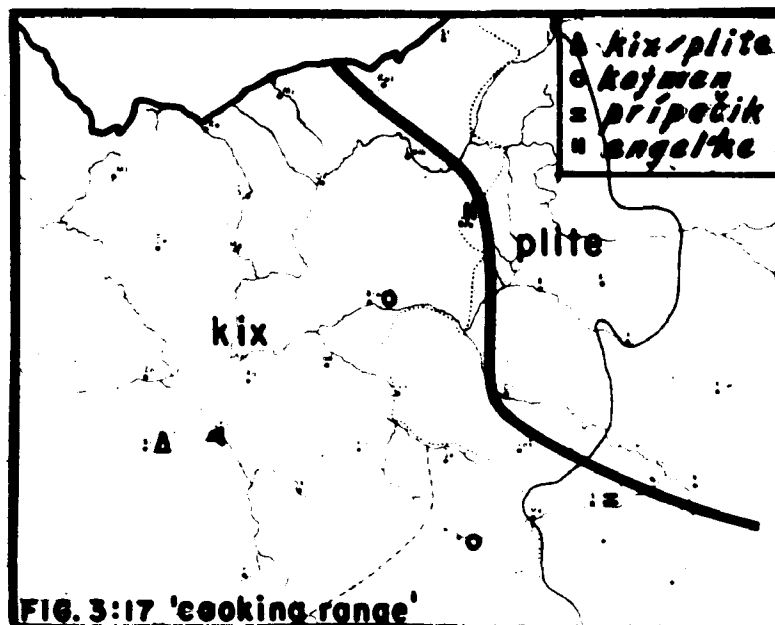
FIG. 3:17 'COOKING RANGE'. The eastern variant plite (Polish plyta '(metal) plate, top surface of stove') is a direct loan from Slavic, while the predominant form in the west, kix (MHG küche 'kitchen'), seems to be a semantic calque of Polish kuchnia 'kitchen'.<sup>5</sup>

FIG. 3:18 'YES'. Jo suggests MHG ja; the origin of the eastern form

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<sup>5</sup>The phonological variants of kix 'kitchen, range' are illustrated in Fig. 5:59.





je 'yes' remains obscure; its deviance suggests that it is the innovation.

FIG. 3:19 'GROWN'. Forms of the past participle of vaksn 'to grow' (MHG wahsen), gevaksn/gevoksn, display the same alternation of [a] and [o] as those of hengen 'to hang' (Fig. 3:4). The distribution of the variants is reversed, however. The explanation of possible conditioning by a following nasal is of course inapplicable here but still, from the point of view of attested Germanic forms, the variant with [o] again appears to be the innovation.

FIG. 3:20 trejslen 'TO SHAKE'. The vowel, as well as the r, suggest E. Slavic origin (cf. Belor. trésci; but Pol. trząść, trzęsi; Ukr. trjastý, trjasé). If the l in trejslen is epenthetic, this is unique in the integration of Slavic origin verbs. If, on the other hand, it derives from a Slavic past tense form (Pol. trzęsła, Belor. trésła), it is again the only instance of its kind in Yiddish. In SEY we find the more predictable tresen; trejslen, by its very unpredictability, suggests some antiquity.

FIG. 3:21 'FROZEN'. The variants gefrorn/farfrorn 'frozen' are both composed of Germanic morphological materials. The verbal complement in the latter construction is, however, a semantic calque of a Slavic prefix, za- (e.g. Belor. zamerznúc 'to freeze up' vs. merznúc 'to freeze'.<sup>6</sup>

Although the limits of some eastern innovations do correspond with one or another of the previously delimited isogloss bundles, there does not appear to be any tendency for their isoglosses to cluster along these lines. In fact, many of these innovations display a decided lack

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<sup>6</sup> This productive calquing device in Yiddish was first described by Landau (1928) and was recently studied in greater detail by Wexler (1962).

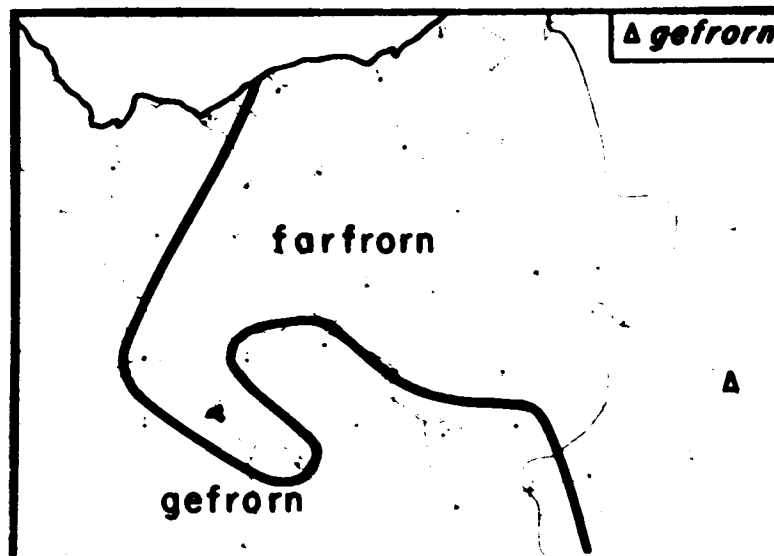


FIG. 3:21 'frozen'

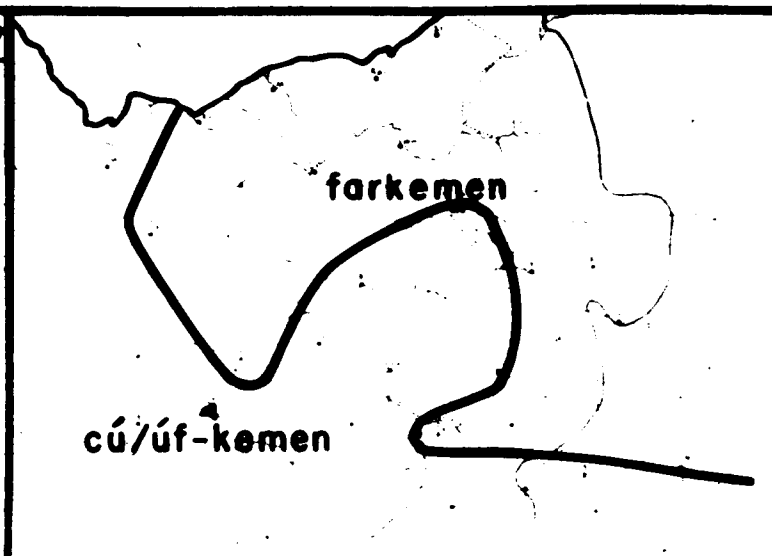


FIG. 3:22 'to comb (pf.)'

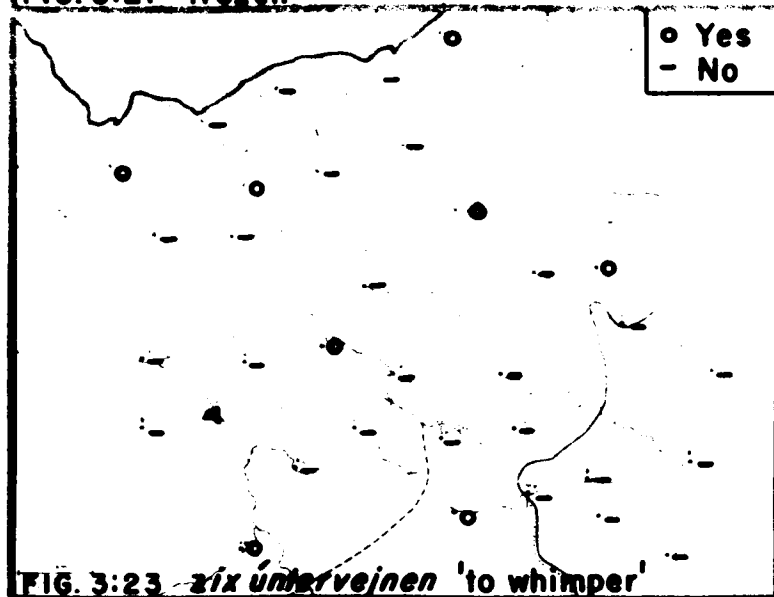


FIG. 3:23 *zix únterveinen* 'to whimper'

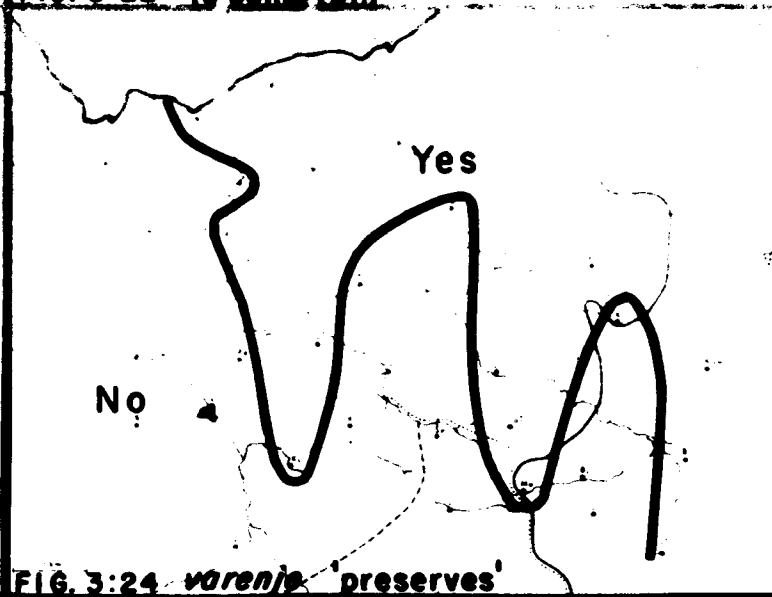


FIG. 3:24 *varenje* 'preserves'

of consolidation in their distribution. This is apparent from the occurrence of farkemen 'to comb' (Fig. 3:22), zix úntervejnen 'to whimper' (Fig. 3:23), both semantic calques of Slavic verbs (Belor. začasác', padplákivac'), and varenje 'preserves' (Russ. varénie), (Fig. 3:24).

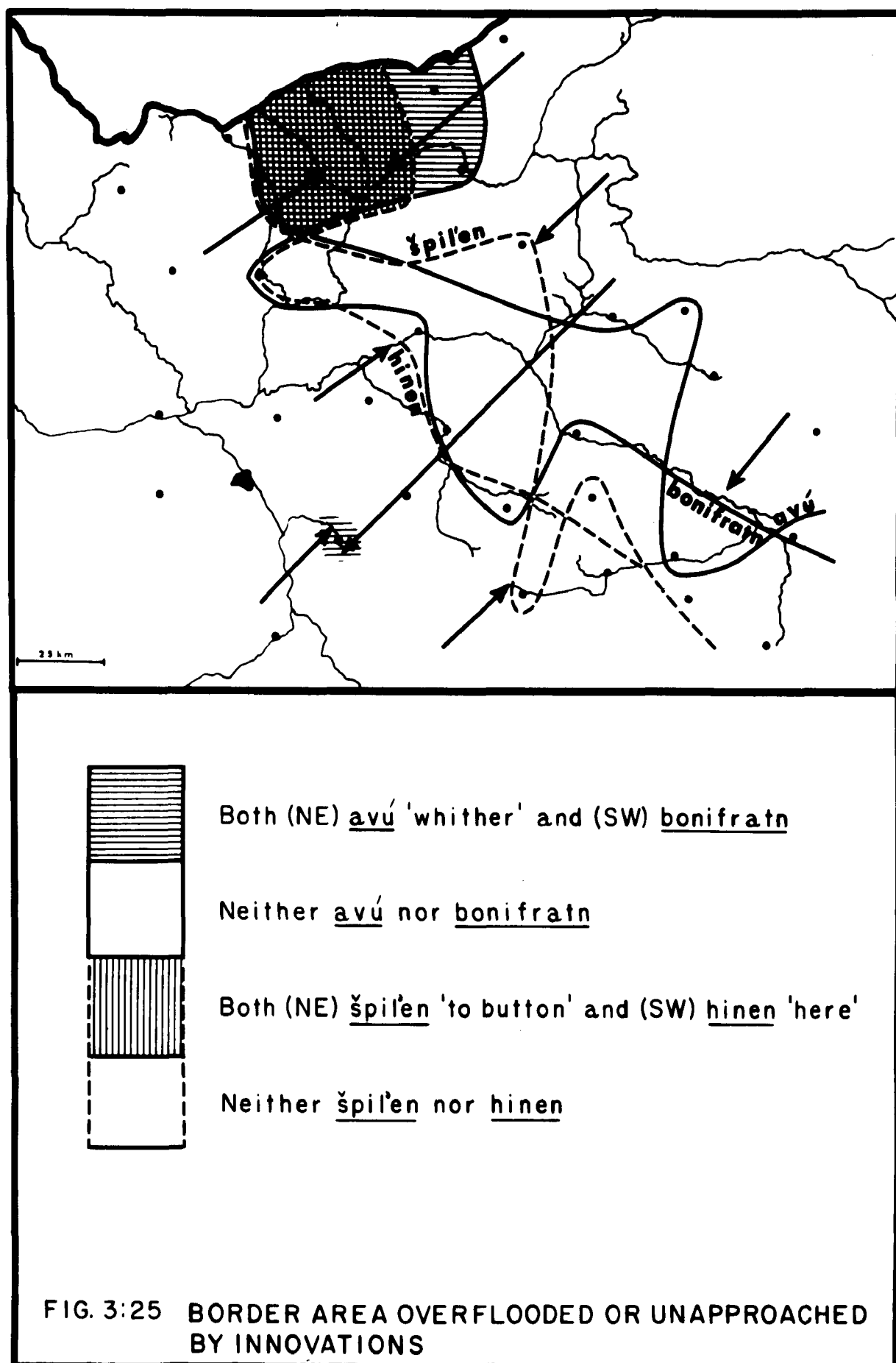
Unlike the composite maps of western innovations, a summary representation of lexical innovations of eastern origin would therefore serve little purpose. On the other hand, eastern and western forms can profitably be considered together. We introduce several new lexical items for this purpose:

FIG. 3:25 Border Areas Unreached or Overflooded by Innovations.

Of the words included in this composite picture, aví 'whither' (MHG wá 'where, whence') and (far)špil'en 'to button up' (Belor. zašpíl'vac', zašpilíc') are decidedly innovations of eastern origin. In the west their meanings are rendered by vu(a)hín and (far)kneplen (cf. knepl 'button (dim.)', knop, MHG knopf) respectively. Of interest is the fact that, although špil'en and kneplen 'to button' divide the area, the corresponding substantives spil'ke 'a pin' and knepl 'a button' are universal.

The words bonifratn and hinen emanate from the west. The former is derived from a Christian religious order (Polish bonifrater) which gave its name to the hospitals it sponsored and, more specifically, to insane asylums. Though such institutions seem to have existed in various Polish cities, the term bonifratn, among our informants, referred to the hospital in Warsaw or to the street on which it was located.

Wherever hinen 'here, in this room' was understood beyond the



area in which it was used, informants described it as a word peculiar to Warsaw (cf. MHG hinn[e(n)] '(from) hence').

We observe that the extreme northern area is overrun by innovations from both directions, while to the south, the area that lies essentially between Isoglosses 1 and 2 is often unreached by innovations from either direction. It seems, therefore, that in this "passive" interstitial area we may expect to find concentrations of archaic or recessive phenomena.

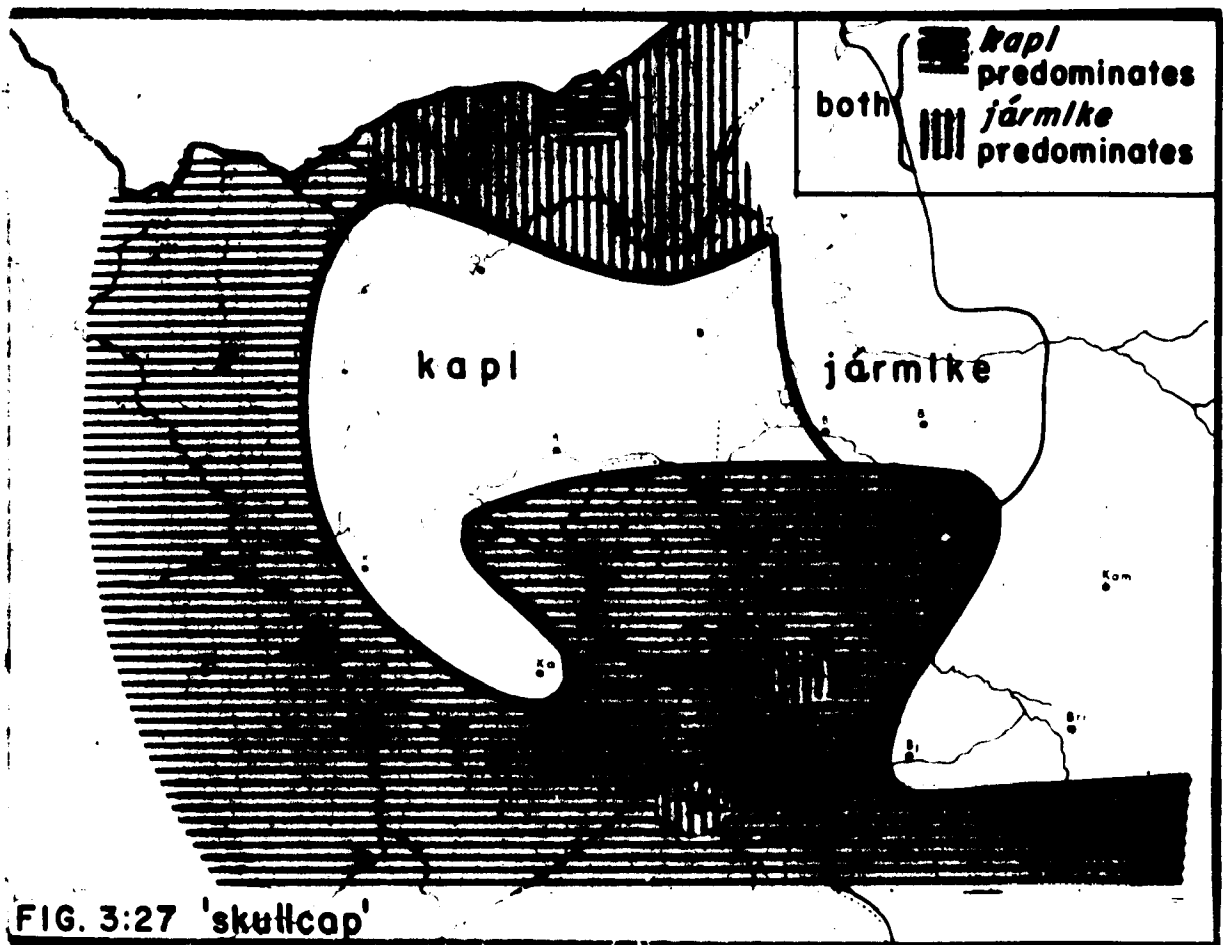
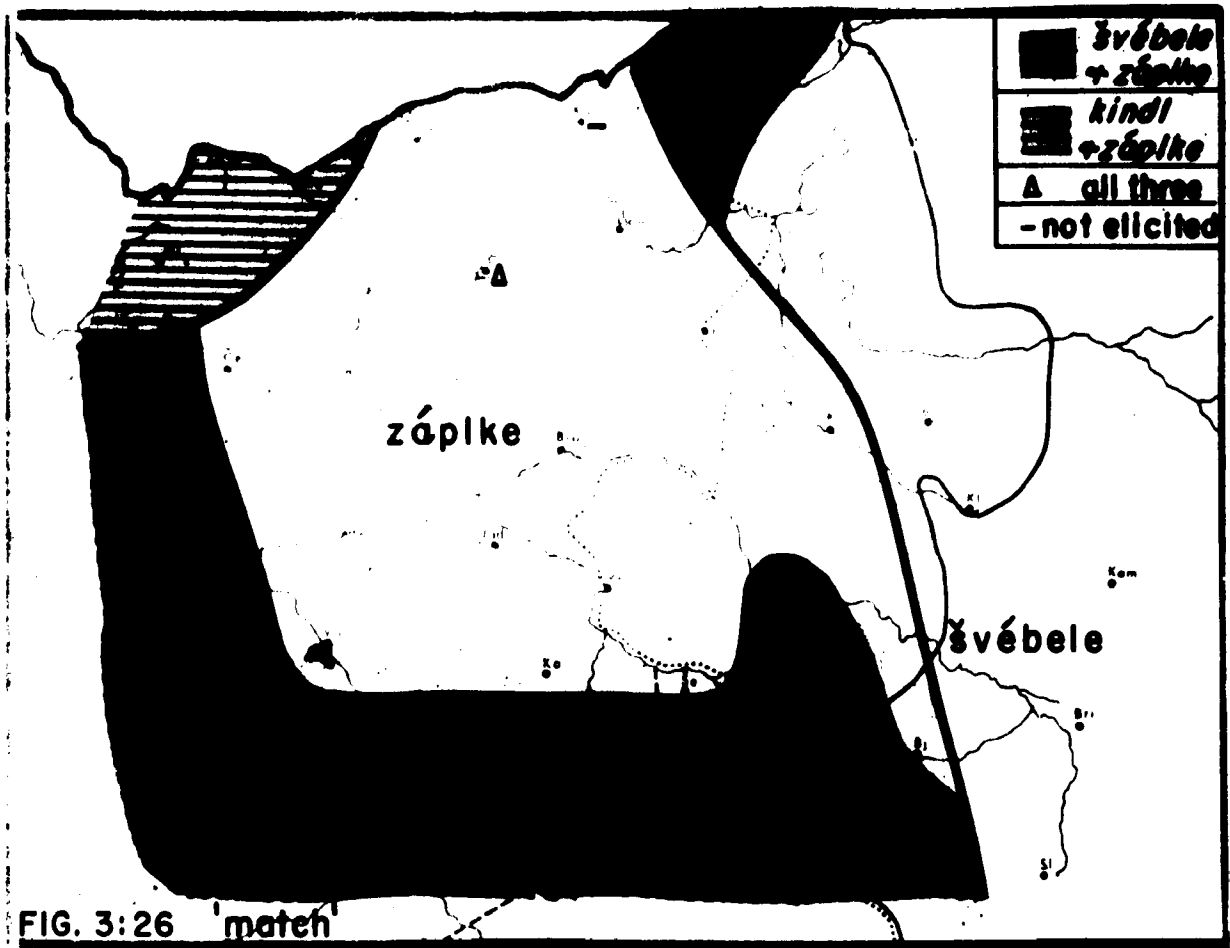
### 3.13 Patterns of Regional Consolidation

While the interstitial area may be less strongly affected by innovations from the SW and NE than its neighboring regions, it nevertheless displays an independent dynamic according to which the lexical materials of the language are ordered.

3.13.1 Elimination of Synonymy. In the following illustrations, the central area is distinguished by the fact that the coexistence of competing variants has been eliminated.

FIG. 3:26 'MATCH'. The word švébele, apparently a Yiddish innovation (cf. švebl 'sulphur', MHG swēbel), here appears as the older form. In the east it is the sole designation for 'match'; in the northcentral area it has been entirely displaced by a more recent loanword, záplke (Pol. zapalka). In the south and west the two synonyms coexist side by side.

FIG. 3:27 'SKULLCAP'. The eastern designation for the skullcap, worn by males indoors in observance of the commandment to keep one's head covered, is jármike (Pol. jarmuka, Belor. jarmólka, Ukr. jarmílka



Turkish jağmurluk). Again the typically eastern form co-occurs with a western form, kapl (cf. MHG kappe 'cap') everywhere except in the central, interstitial area.<sup>7</sup>

3.13.2 Compromise Forms.<sup>8</sup> In addition to the elimination of synonymy, a typical characteristic of contact areas is the formation of lexical blends:

FIG. 3:28 'TO STICK OUT (ONE'S TONGUE)'. Among the illustrated forms, the word (arojs)blekn (MHG blecken 'to show'<sup>9</sup>) is restricted to the northwest. In the adjoining area to the southeast, the unusual form lekn (literally 'to lick') occurs instead. The latter is most likely a folk reinterpretation of the unfamiliar blekn. (The only related form of blekn that has otherwise survived in Yiddish is antplekn 'to reveal', and the etymological connection is unlikely to be apparent to the layman.)

FIG. 3:29 'TO ROLL (A BALL)'. The western variant kolern (Mod. Ger. kollern) seems to be of recent origin in German itself (Kluge s.v.). Its alternant kulern is also cited by Kluge and this, rather than the regional alternation of Yiddish [o] and [u] (cf. §5.12.3), is the probable source of the Yiddish lexical differences in the west. In the east, the prevalent form is kajklen (of obscure etymology but perhaps the result

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<sup>7</sup> Similar patterns emerge in the same area as a result of the replacement of štojɔ 'dust' (Fig. 3:75) by Slavic-origin synonyms.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. also Fig. 3:13, showing drejderl 'top' as a blend of drejdl and trender.

<sup>9</sup> In Modern German apparently restricted to the context (die Zähne) blecken 'to bare one's teeth'.



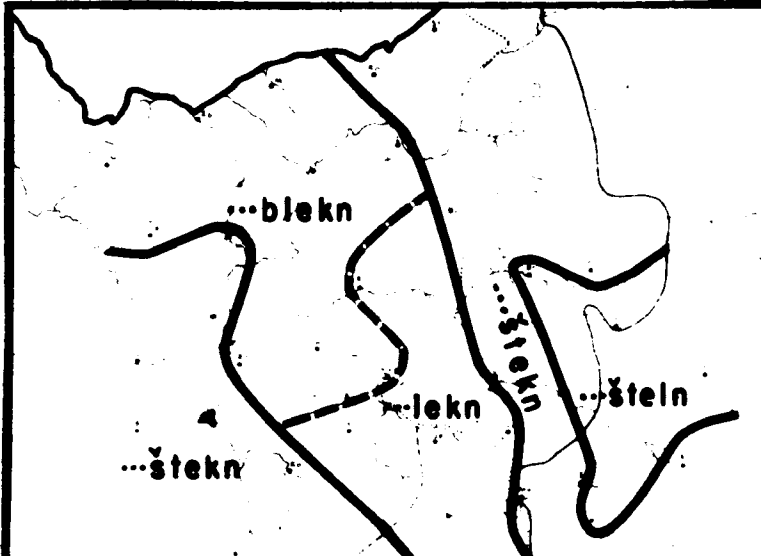


FIG. 3:28 'to stick out (one's tongue)'

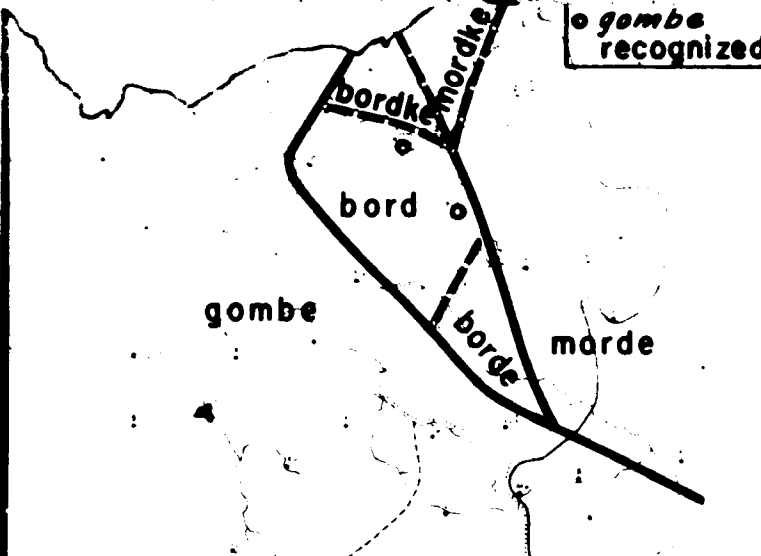


FIG. 3:30 'chin'

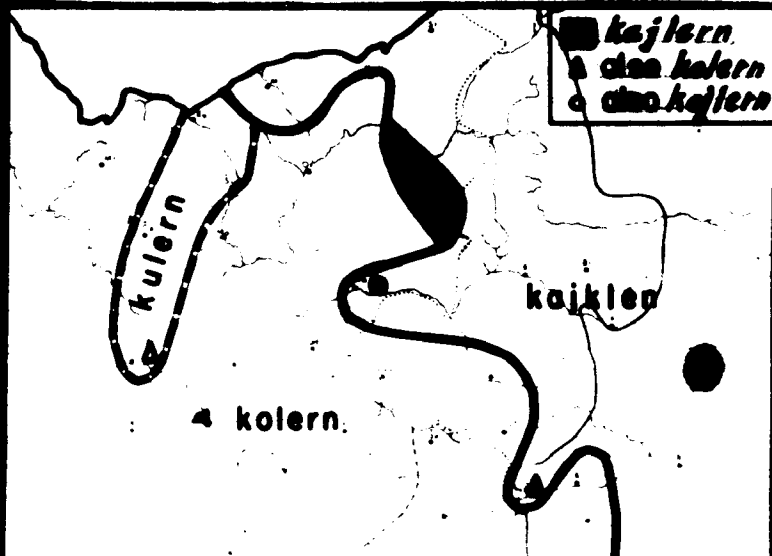


FIG. 3:29 'to roll (a ball)'

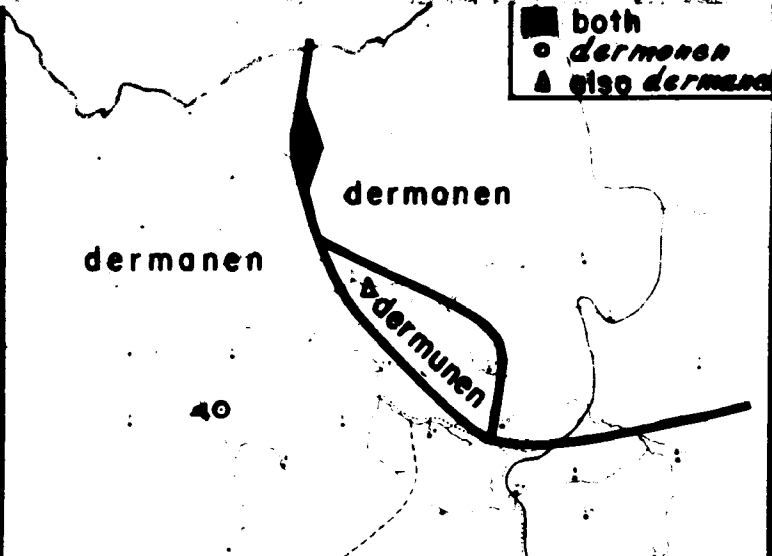


FIG. 3:31 'to remind, to mention'

of a contamination of forms related to MHG kugelen, kulen 'to roll' and kiule 'club').

Of the compromise innovations, kajlern can only be a blend of kolern and kajklen, while kojlern is a hypercorrection based on the regular alternation of [o] and [oj] illustrated in Fig. 5:48. The blends are distributed in the interstitial area under discussion.

FIG. 3:30 'CHIN'. Neither gombe (Pol. geba, earlier gaba) nor morde (substandard Pol. < Belor. mórda) is the ordinary word for 'chin' in the source language. Both designate 'snout' or, colloquially, 'mouth'. Polish broda 'chin, beard', was probably the model for the extension of Yiddish bord 'beard' to 'chin' in the area between gombe and morde. In any case, the local forms borde and bordke 'chin' must have developed as a result of the blending of bord and morde (dim. mordke).

FIG. 3:31 'TO REMIND, TO MENTION'. Two earlier maps (Figs. 3:4, 3:19) illustrated the alternation of [a] and [o] in lexical variants. Since instances of this variation are few (perhaps six in all), and the geographic distribution of the variants is inconsistent, we have included them all in our lexical materials (cf. §3.02).

The alternation, in Fig. 3:31, of dermanen/dermonen (cf. MHG manen), itself a rare deviation from the SY sound shift (\* ā >) \* ō > ū (cf. §5.12.3), can readily be assigned to this category of lexical variants. However, the intermediate form dermunen is a unique border innovation based on the regular sound shift.

### 3.2 Other Geographic Patterns

The following paragraphs illustrate additional patterns of regional specialization in the lexical inventory. Some of them are

already familiar from Chapter 2; others emerge here for the first time.

### 3.21 Systematic Extinction of Lexical Forms

A number of lexical items reveal distributional patterns strikingly similar to the channels of extinction described in §2.21.3. None, however, show the "funnel effect" displayed by the non-verbal items in Figs. 2:19 and 2:25.

FIG. 3:32 canken 'TO FLICKER' (cf. MHG zanken 'to quarrel').

FIG. 3:33 (m/n i) štejnsgezogt. Apparently derived from an expression of regret, intended to ward off evil, (dem Štejn zaj es gezogt 'may it [the bad news] be told to the rock'), it has lost all semblance of its original form and, over a large area, its original meaning as well. That the distortion of form and meaning is preliminary to the extinction of the item itself is suggested by the next example.

FIG. 3:34 skocl kumt. The phrase is probably derived from something like MHG bis gote (unde mir) willekommen<sup>10</sup> 'be welcome to God (and me)'. Wherever it occurs it is associated with someone's arrival, but nowhere does it retain the implication of welcome or blessing. Initial s- is generally interpreted as the brief form of the neuter definite article dos and consequently kocl is taken to be a designation for the visitor (generally one who visits infrequently); thus 'the kocl is coming'. More specific distortions occur, however: a new definite article may be added (der skocl) and skocl itself may be reinterpreted as škoc(1) 'scoundrel' (cf. škoc < Ashkenazic Hebrew škocim 'ruffians, gentile boys'). In the area of the phonological shift of u to i (cf. §5.12.1)

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. also Rejzen (1924a:232f.).

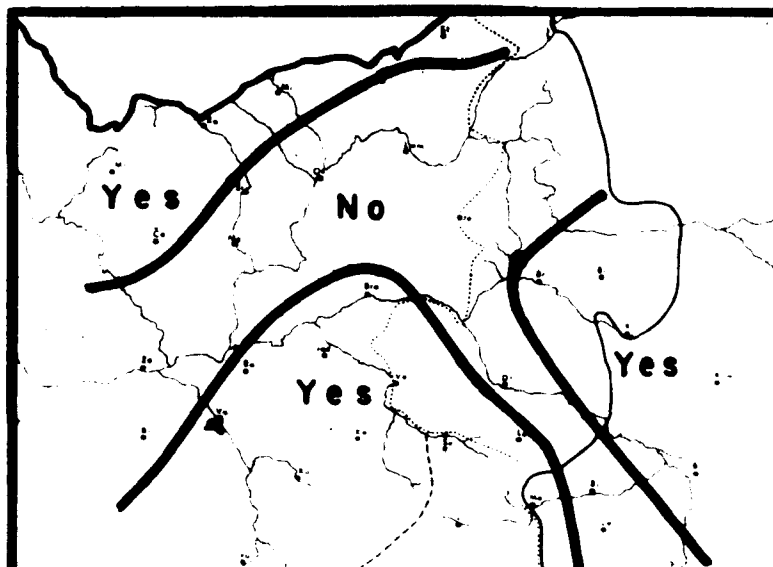


FIG. 3:32. *canken* 'to flicker'

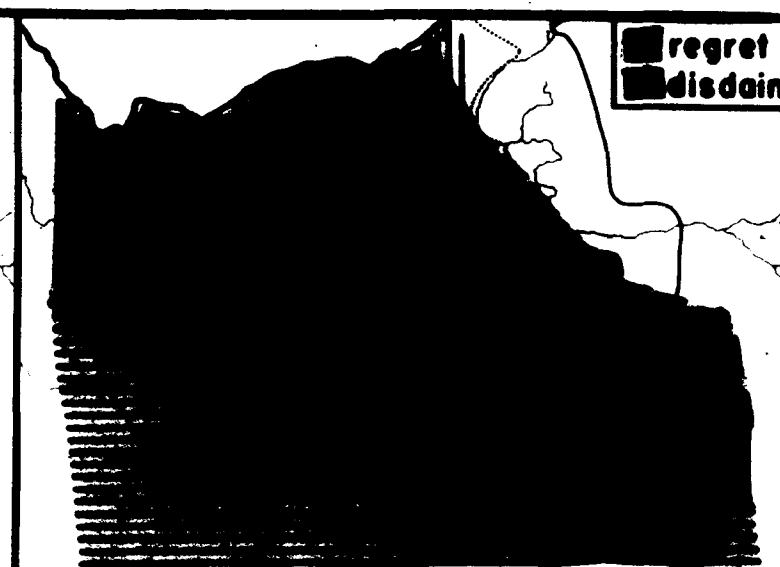


FIG. 3:33 Connotations of *mišćina, gezogt*

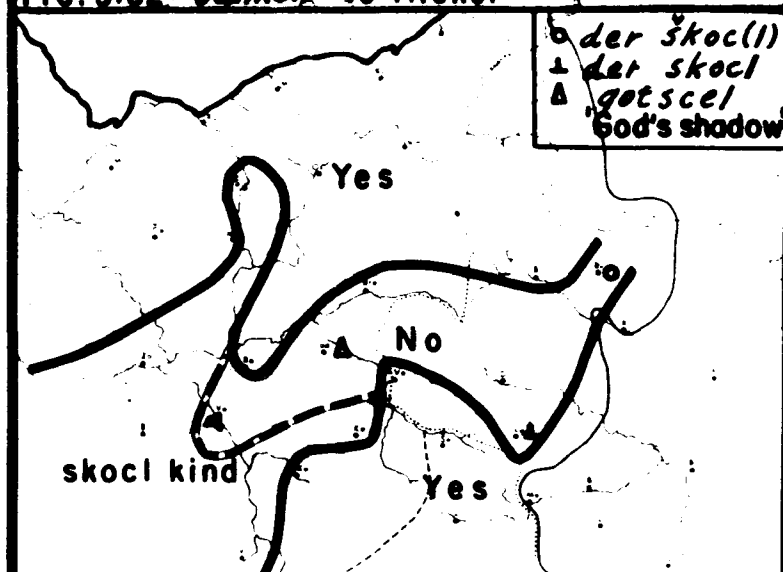


FIG. 3:34 *skocl kamt*

## LEXICAL CHANNELS OF EXTINCTION

[skocl kumt] 'the kocl is coming' has been mistaken for [skocl kint] 'the kocl child,' giving rise to the pleonastic [skocl kint iz gəkimən] 'the kocl child has come'. In one case, an informant's response consisted simply of an "etymology": gots cel kumt 'God's shadow is coming' (cf. HA şel 'shadow').

### 3.22 Specific Southeastern Items<sup>11</sup>

FIG. 3:35 A composite of five items restricted in their distribution to the southeast: tolkač 'pestle' (Ukr. towkač[yk] Belor. tawkačyk), krénece 'well, spring' (Ukr. krynýcja), štumpik 'blunt' (MHG stumpfik), genamnik 'rogue' (etymology?), anustn 'the other day' (cf. MHG nu(m)ft, nu(n)st 'seizure [of an opportunity]').

It seems probable that further investigation will reveal the extension of this area far to the south, and eastward into the Ukraine.

### 3.23 Specific Northwestern Items

FIG. 3:36 A composite of mank 'among' (MHG manc), plindzn 'pancakes' (Mod. Ger. Plinse of Slavic origin), kindl 'match' (MHG kien 'torch'), varglen 'to roll (dough)' (MHG walge(r)n 'to roll'?), cvel 'tablecloth' (MHG zwehel, zwēle).

The location of these forms, and the fact of their Germanic origin, is strongly suggestive of influence from neighboring East Prussia. There is no apparent reason, however, why similar influence should not have been felt further east, in communities equally close to the border.

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<sup>11</sup>Though many of the items included in the following composite maps are the result of semasiological inquiries, only the alternants relevant to the areas in question have been cited.

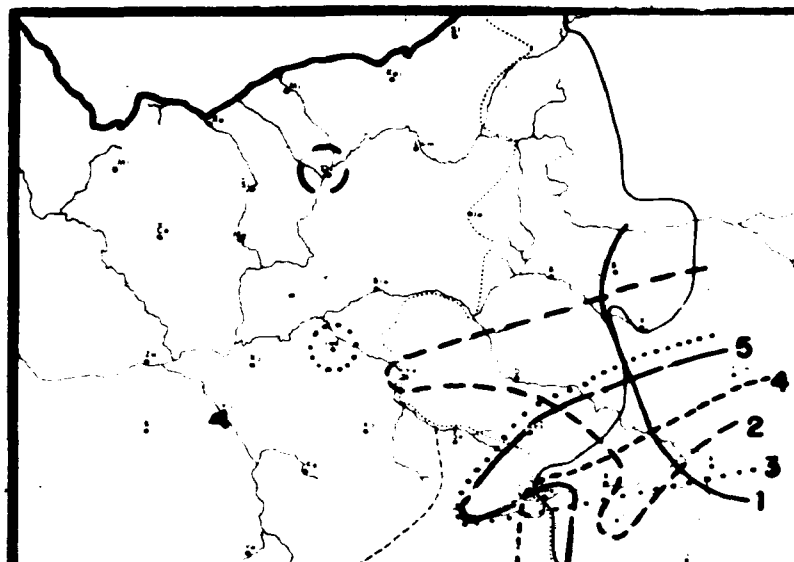


FIG. 3:35 SOUTHEASTERN SPECIALTIES

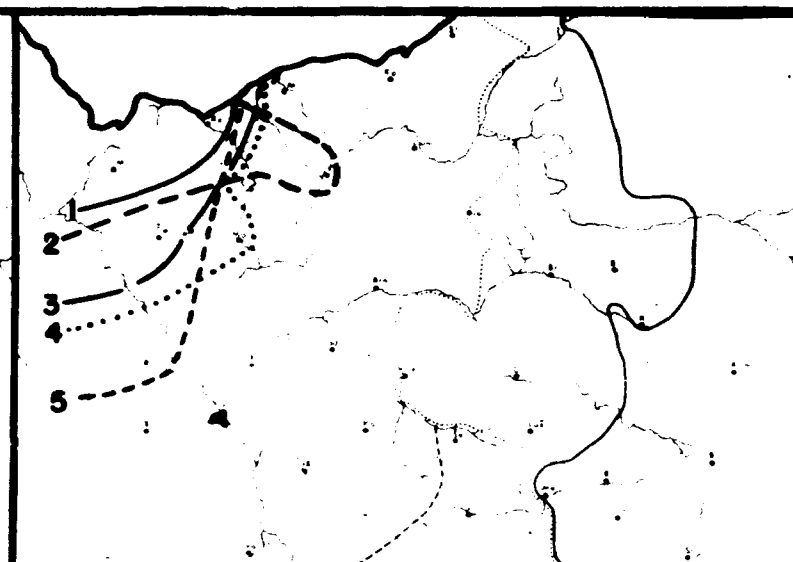


FIG. 3:36 NORTHWESTERN SPECIALTIES

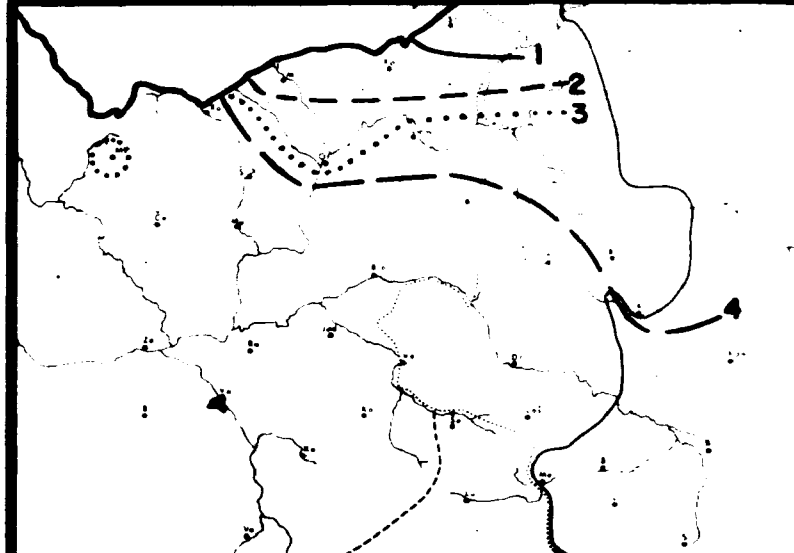


FIG. 3:37 NORTHEASTERN SPECIALTIES

FIG. 3:35	FIG. 3:36	FIG. 3:37
1. krénice	1. mank	1. branfn
2. tolkač	2. kindl	2. vegl
3. anustn	3. cvel	3. šiltn
4. štumpik	4. plindzn	4. kamen
5. genamnik	5. varglen	

### 3.24 Specific Northeastern Items

FIG. 3:37 A composite of šiltŋ 'to curse' an irregular deformation of šeltŋ (MHG schelten 'to scold'), branfn 'brandy' (vs. bronfn; Modern German Branntwein), kamen 'to comb' (vs. kemen; MHG kammen/kemmen), vegl 'part (in the hair)' (veg 'path, road'; MHG wēc 'way').

Again we might predict that further investigation would prove that these forms are indicative of a lexical area that extends well into the northeast.

### 3.25 Innovations from the South

FIG. 3:38 A composite of a large number of words which suggest a northward push from Poland Minor. While known to the south of our area, few of them reach its northern borders: ivdesjor 'next year' ( < af dos jor 'upon the year' (?) cf. SEY ivde vox 'next week'); škormic 'paper cone' (etymology?); rises 'turmoil' (HA harisuth 'destruction' ?), tomid 'always' (HA tamid), nablen 'to speak evil' (HA nabél), zidlen un šnidlen 'to curse intensely' (enlargement of zidlen cf. MHG sudeln), cvoncik 'twenty' (MHG zwein-, zwēn-zec, -zic).

### 3.26 Small-Scale Localisms

FIG. 3:39 'BURRS'. There is a multiplicity of local designations for the "weapons" with which children molested one another and their bearded elders on Tishah Beav, the fast-day when Jews mourn the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Schauss tells us (1938:105) that "the children of the town are also impressed with the sadness of the day, but still, they find the opportunity to indulge in a form of play. They throw the seed burrs of plants at each other in the synagogue".





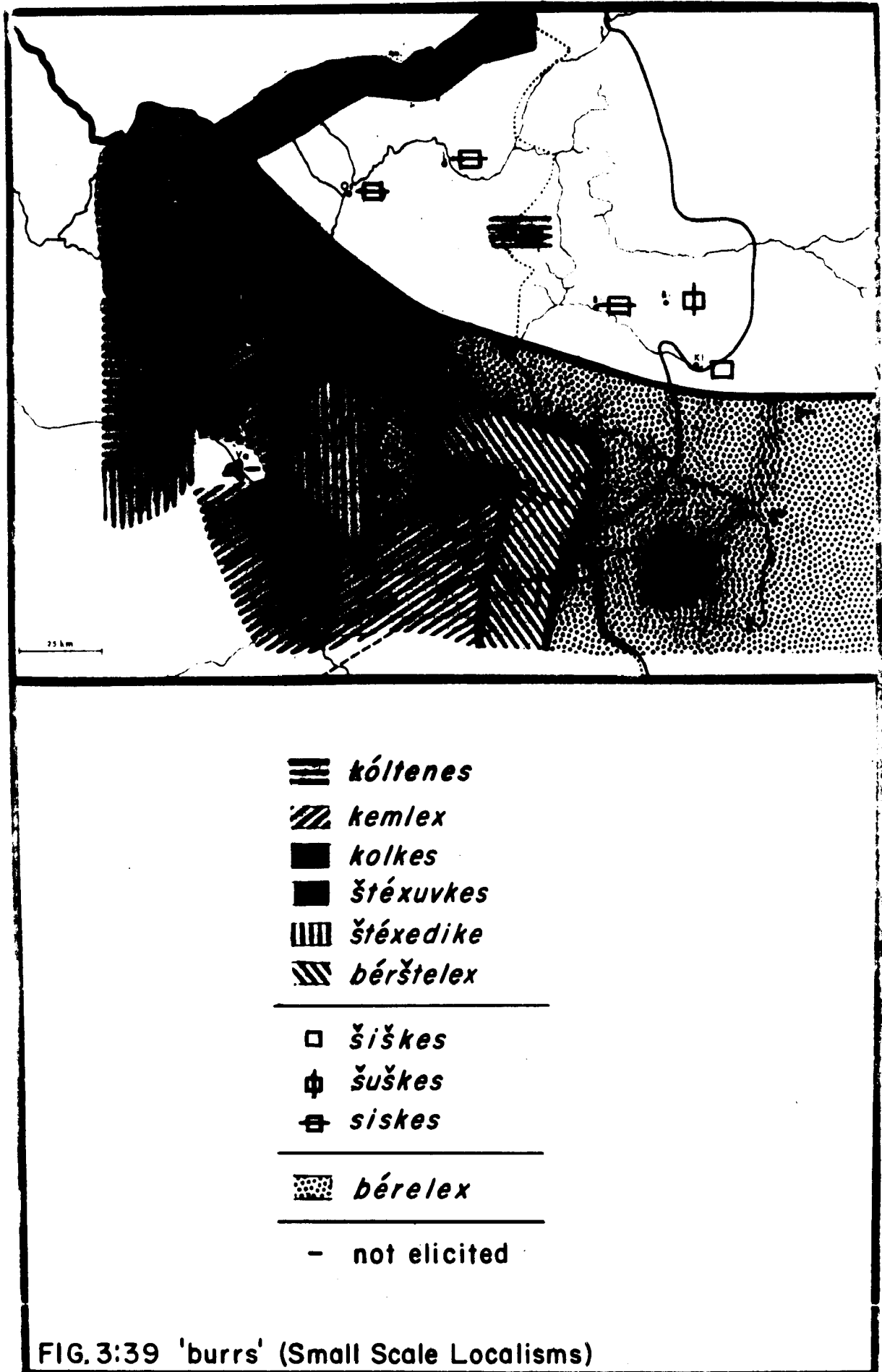
The most widespread forms are bérelex (MHG ber 'berry') and variants of šiškes (Pol. szyszka 'cone [of a coniferous tree]'). More restricted are bérštelex, literally 'brushes (dim.)', kemlex 'combs (dim.)', kóltenes (cf. Pol. kołtun 'elflock'), kolkes (cf. Pol. kolka, 'restharrow, Ononis repens'), and derivatives of štexn 'to prick' (MHG stächen). The northern form štéxuvkes may have gotten embroiled in the phonetic alternation of clear and velar (sometimes completely vocalized) variants of [l] (cf. §5.26); thus štéxlkes > štéxukes > štéxuvkes.

The outstanding feature of this map is the fact that despite the large number of designations offered by the informants, the pairing of towns is obviously not random. We thus have definite evidence of local peculiarities on a small scale.

### 3.27 Survivals

The poor consolidation of the examples that follow is in sharp contrast to the geographic cohesion of the preceding illustrations.

FIG. 3:40 Survivals of klejt 'STORE'. The major designations for 'store' are gevélb (MHG gewelbe 'vault') and krom (MHG krâm(e) 'retail booth; wares'); a third form klejt (Pol. obs. kleta, kletka, formerly 'store') is the sole form in two locations and a recognized alternate in a number of others. In a large part of the Ukraine, klejt is the sole and regular Yiddish word for 'store' (cf. Jofen 1952: map XVII; U. Weinreich 1962a: 7, Fig. 2). In our area it probably predates its synonyms, and the map may show it in the process of being supplanted by them. (Cf. the interpretation of al'ker 'bedroom' in §3.11, Figs. 3:6-3:7).



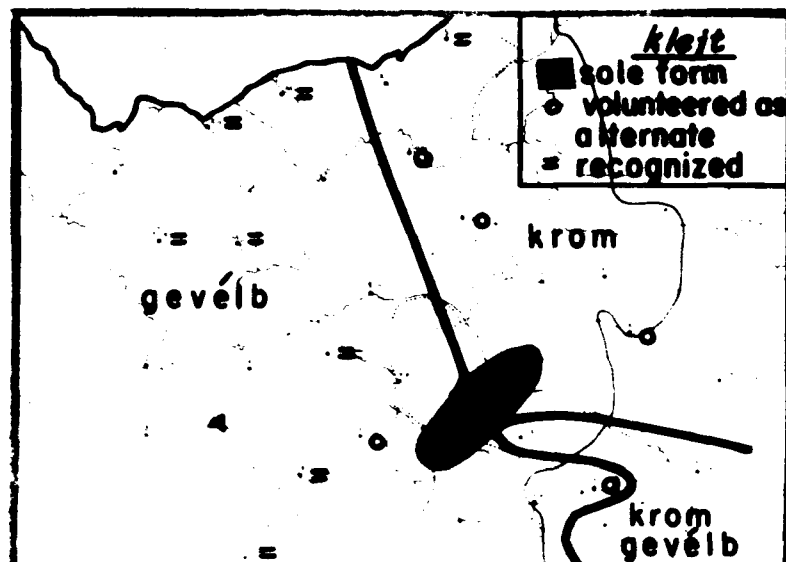


FIG. 3:40 'store' (survivals of *klet*)

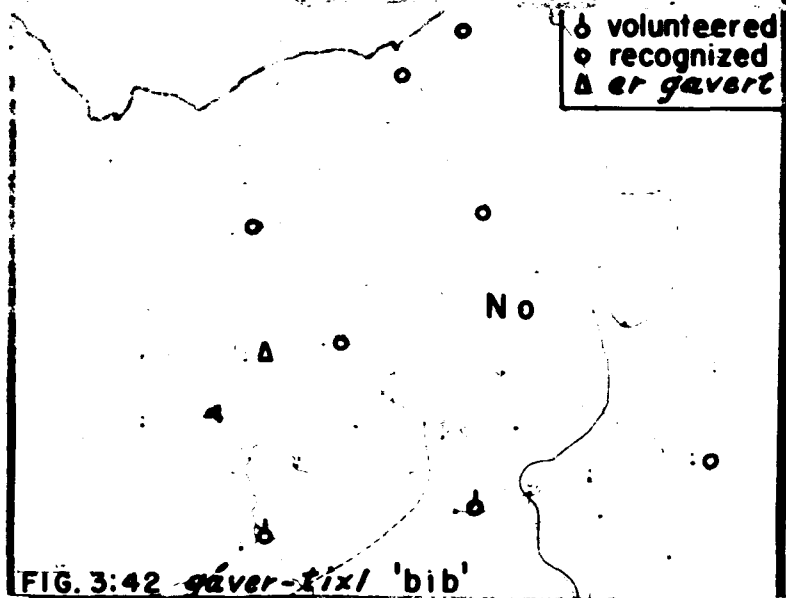


FIG. 3:42 *gáver-tíxl* 'bib'

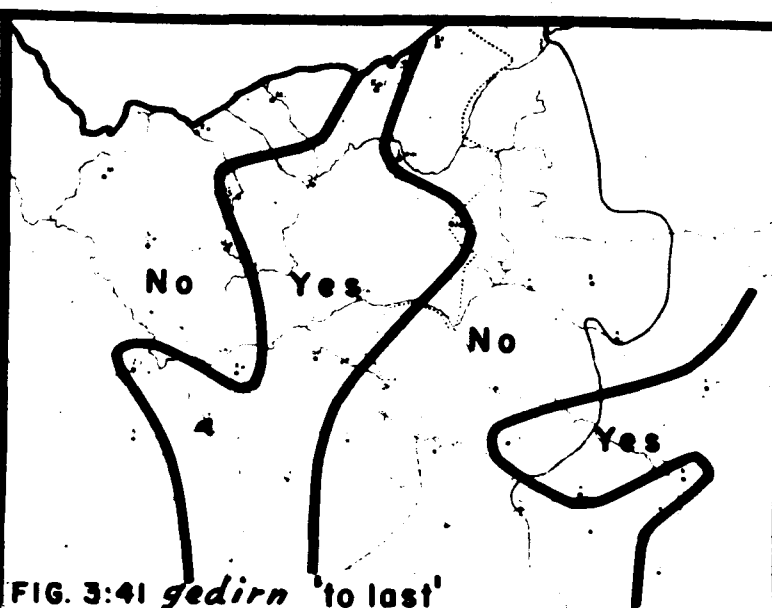


FIG. 3:41 *gedirn* 'to last'

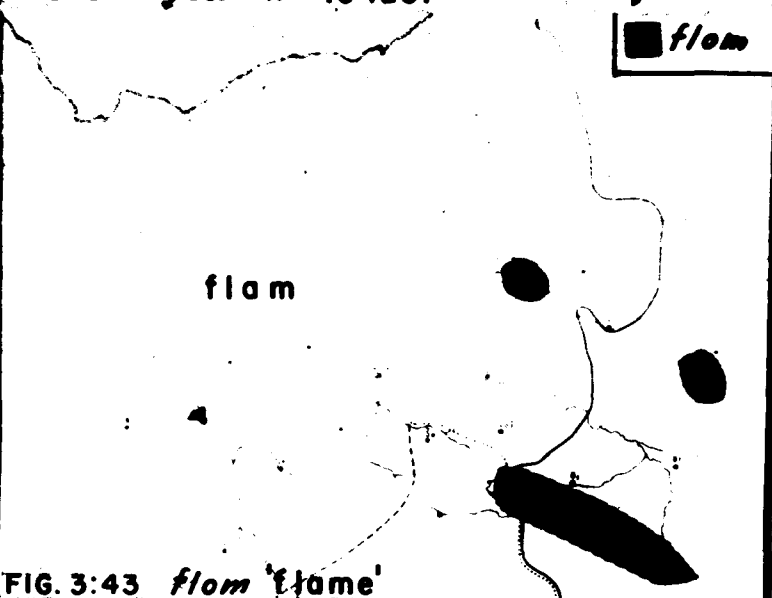


FIG. 3:43 *flom* 'flame'

FIG. 3:41 Survival of gedirn 'TO LAST'. The more common Standard Yiddish gedojern 'to endure, to last' (MHG dûren), has an alternant gedirn whose present distribution suggests that it too may formerly have been more widespread. (Cf. Vilenkin 1931: Map 41; also the area unreached by innovations shown above in Fig. 3:25.)

FIG. 3:42 gávertixl 'BIB'. The sporadic recognition of gávertixl 'bib', or the substitution of a different construction with gaver (cf. late MHG geifer, dial. gâwer 'drivel'; Kluge:14th ed. s.v.) appears to be another vestige of a Western Yiddish form in the east.

FIG. 3:43 'FLAME'. Since the form was not deliberately solicited, it is impossible to tell whether prompting would have shown the rare variant fłom 'flame' (MHG vłam[me]) to be more widely known. This is another of the irregular, lexicalized [o]/[a] alternations which we have illustrated repeatedly.

### 3.28 Patterns Not Treated Further

Among the lexical alternations not considered in our discussion, some are more easily explained than others. Thus, at approximately the location of Isogloss 2, we find a boundary between dojč/dajč (MHG diutsch[e]) as designations for the German language. In terms of regular Yiddish phonological developments eastern [dajč] should alternate with western [dāč] (cf. §5.12.4); dojč is inexplicable except as a widespread borrowing from Modern Standard German. Though the material under this heading is too scanty for detailed inferences, it does suggest that the question of regional differences in the influence

of Modern Standard German on Yiddish is worth reopening (cf. also §7.1).

Other patterns are also difficult to interpret properly in the absence of information from outside the area. Among these we find the discontinuous distributions of baglejtn vs. balejtn 'to accompany' (MHG beleiten, geleiten), and the overlapping distributions of réjxern/réjxenen/rójxern 'to smoke (a cigarette)'<sup>13</sup> (cf. MHG rouchen, röuchen 'to smoke [also meat]', Mod. Ger. räuchern 'to smoke [meat]' rauchen 'to smoke a cigarette').

### 3.3 Problems of Slavic-Origin Vocabulary

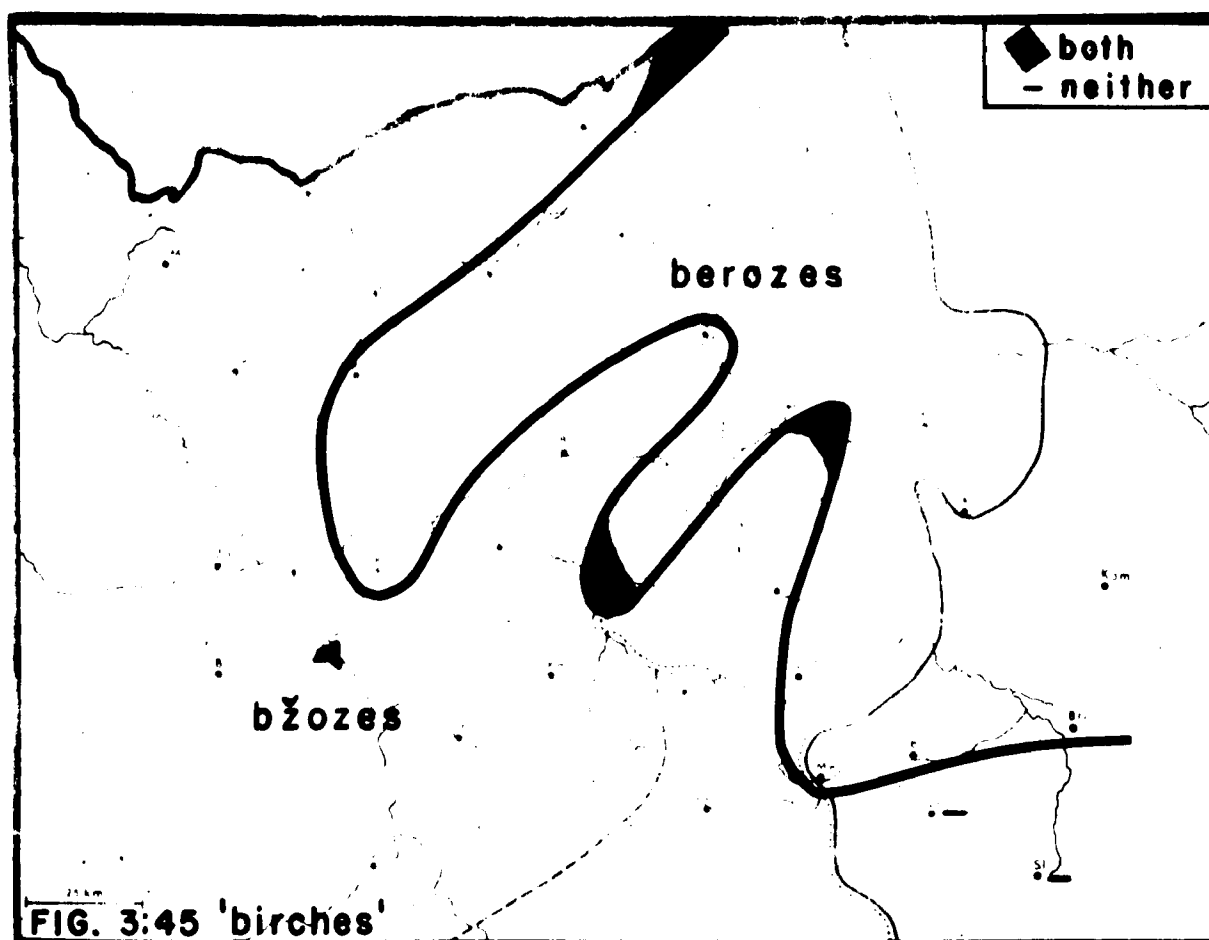
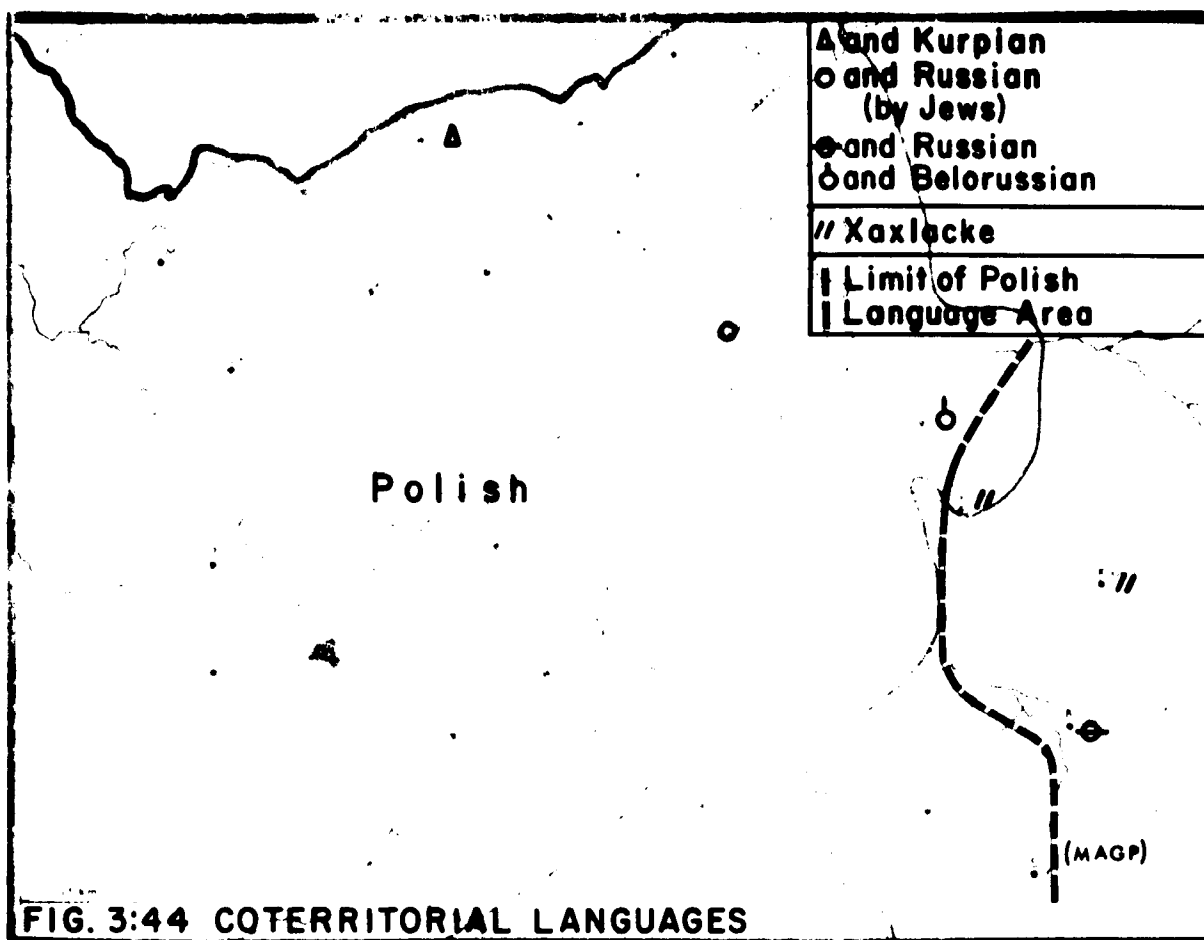
#### 3.30 Preliminary Considerations

Yiddish has been coteritorial with various Slavic languages for some seven centuries and the large stock of lexical elements which it derived from these sources is perhaps the most obvious defining feature of its eastern dialects. Under the circumstances, the regional differentiation of Slavic words in Yiddish can hardly be free of constraints imposed by its coteritoriality with Slavic. On the other hand, we have already indicated the dangers of assuming that variation in Yiddish is congruent with variation among the Slavic languages (§1.2).

Before considering variations in the Slavic component of Yiddish it would be well to examine the distribution of Slavic languages in the area of investigation. In Fig. 3:44 we have mapped the responses of informants to a question seeking to identify the language spoken by

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<sup>13</sup>The distribution of the phonological variants of these forms are depicted in Fig. 5:24.



the non-Jews in their communities. These can be compared with the roughly sketched eastern boundary of Polish-language territory as defined by recent Polish dialect maps (MAGP).

With the exception of two towns in the east (Kleś<sup>XX</sup>ćel and Kámenec-Litóvsk), Polish was identified as the "other" language in the entire area. The two exceptions reported that the local language was Xaxlacke (cf. Pol. chochol 'tuft', chocholaty 'tufted'). Among Russians, xoxly is a term of derision for the Ukrainians (cf. Brückner s.v.) but the term Xaxlacke, in our area, appears to designate a transition between Belorussian and Ukrainian dialects. Of the other eastern communities, Brest reported Russian, and Bilsk, Belorussian, in addition to Polish. In Jáblenke the Jews themselves were said to have spoken Russian in addition to Polish.

Little awareness was shown of possible Polish dialect differences in the area. Only Miśnec in the north gave Kurpiś as an alternant to Polish.<sup>14</sup>

In any case, the basic division between East and West Slavic is reflected on this map. Unfortunately, however, the precise location of the isoglosses between the well-known features that distinguish these

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<sup>14</sup>The Kurpian area, to the east of the river Ómelev in the north, was apparently settled in the first decades of the 18th century by Protestant Mazurs from the northwest. At least in its eastern portion, in the environs of Kol'ne, the area was until then still largely uninhabited (Szyfer 1959). A culturally "recessive" area, its name, Kurpie, is often used derogatorily (Kutrzeba-Pojnarowa 1959:221).

two major branches of the family, are as yet only poorly documented.<sup>15</sup>

### 3.31 Yiddish Reflections of Slavic Phonological Isoglosses

It should be noted at the outset that the differential development of the Proto-Slavic phonological system is extraneous to the history of Yiddish phonology. We therefore consider that variations in the Slavic component, reflecting these differences, are purely lexical in Yiddish.

#### 3.31.1 East vs. West Slavic.

3.31.11 Pleophony. As is well known, the East Slavic languages are distinguished by pleophony, the disyllabic representation of Common Slavic \*or, \*ol, \*er, \*el, as oro, olo, ere, ele. In Polish, on the other hand, the same Proto-Slavic sequences underwent metathesis without a new syllable being formed, yielding ro, lo, re (> rze), le (e.g. Kuraszkiwicz 1963:17). This isogloss is reflected in Yiddish in a number of loanwords (e.g. dlote/dólete 'chisel', dlonje/dolonje 'palm (of the hand)'). In our materials we find it illustrated by the following map:

FIG. 3:45 'BIRCHES'. The variants bžozes (Pol. brzoza), berozes (Belor. bjaróza, Rus. berěza) also reflect the alternation r/ž (on which see §3.31.14 below).

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<sup>15</sup> In this connection, Dr. Władysław Kuraszkiwicz of the University of Poznań writes (in a personal communication to Dr. Uriel Weinreich, May 9, 1963): "There was never a single mixed dialect here, only two separate dialects: a Polish and an East Slavic one, with vocabularies which have grown closer to each other but with different grammatical and phonetic systems. We have to date no full scholarly treatment of these dialects."



It should be noted that some Slavisms appear in Yiddish universally in their West Slavic form (blote 'mud'; there is no \*bólete; bžeg, breg 'bank, shore'; there is no \*bereg, \*bereh).

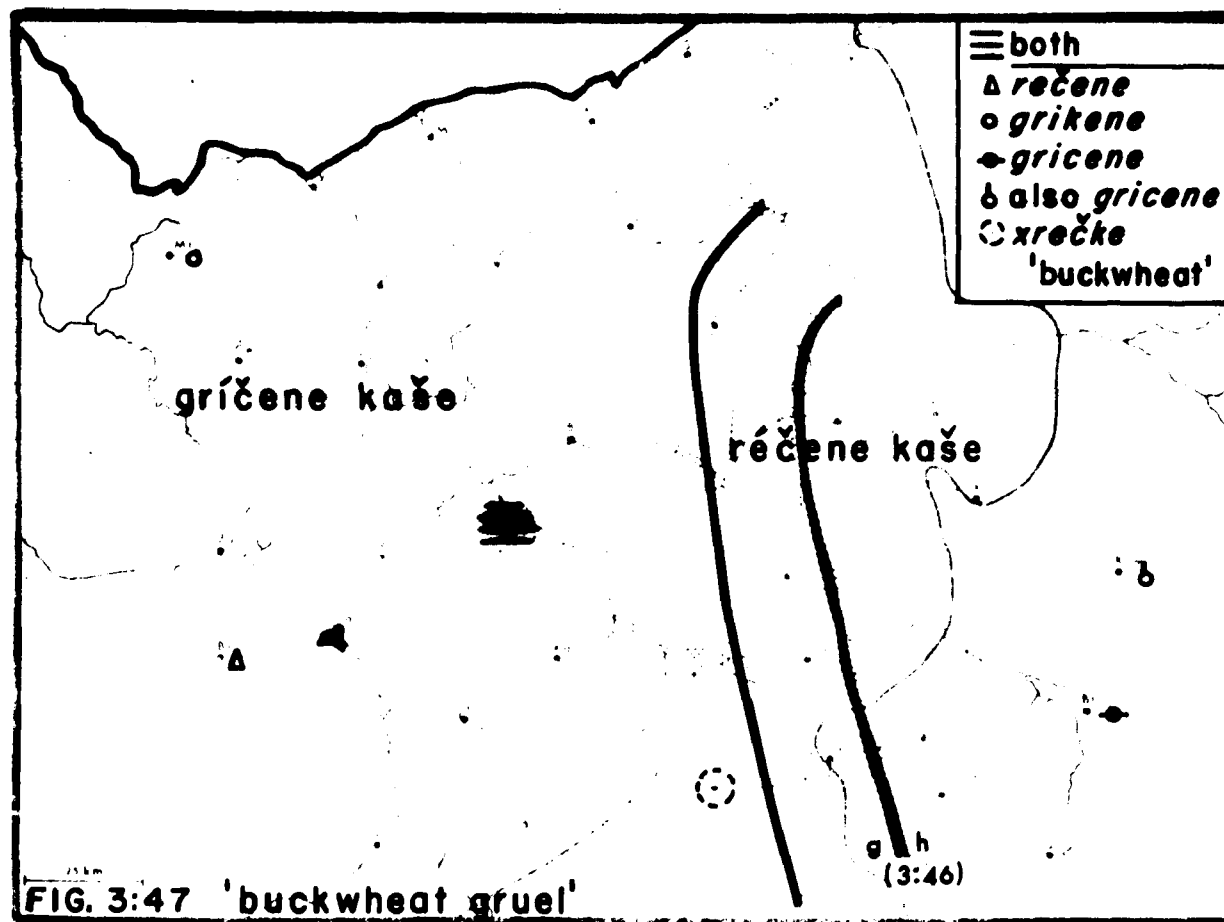
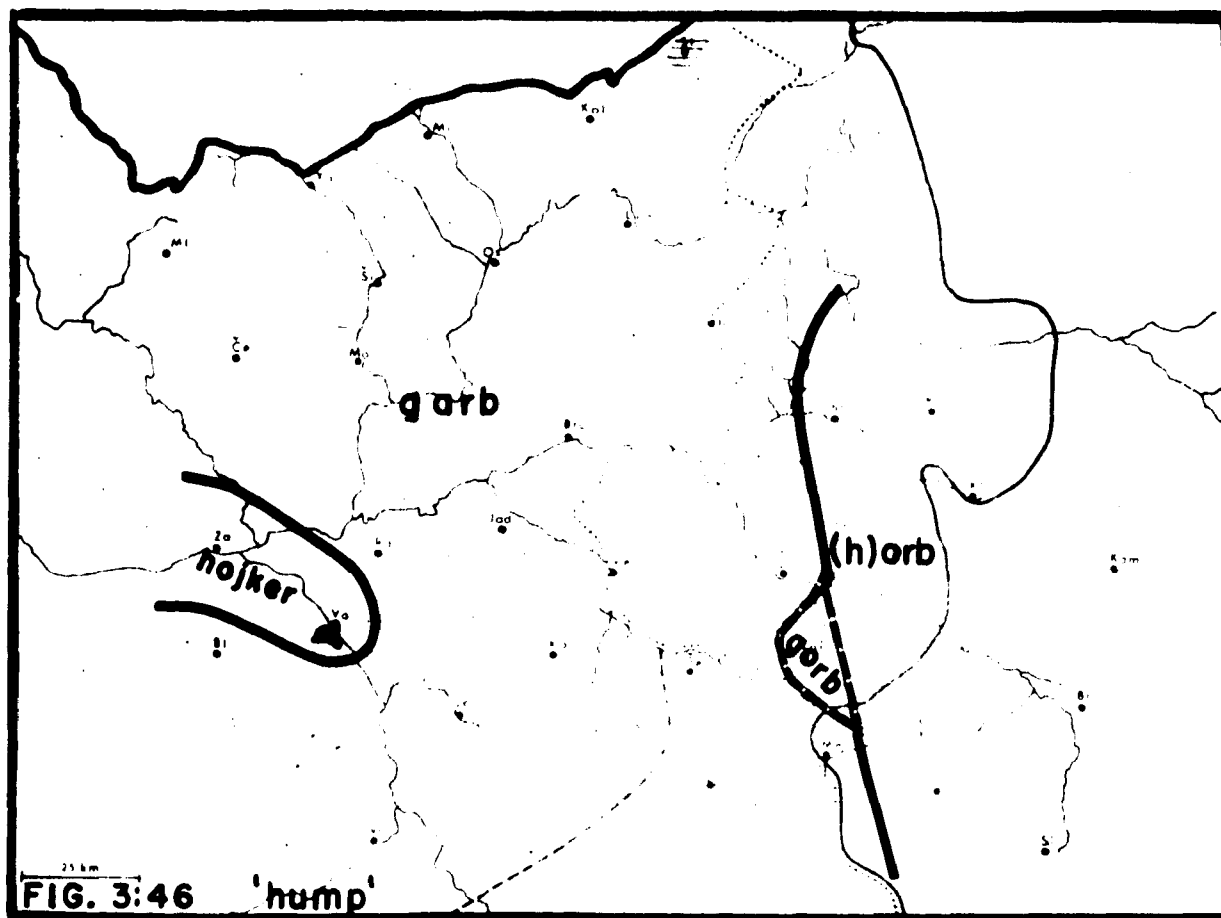
Associated with the development of pleophony is the shift, in East Slavic, of the interconsonantal \*ř to or (e.g. Pol. karmie he feeds, targ 'market', vs. Belor. kórmic', torh; Kuraszkiwicz 1963: 18). The corresponding isogloss is reflected, in our lexical materials, in the following:

FIG. 3:46 'HUMP': garb (Pol. garb) vs. (h)orb (Belor. horb). The variation g/h is described below (§3.31.12). On the westernmost variant hojker cf. MHG hocker, hover.

3.31.12 Spirantization of the Voiced Velar \*g. In Belorussian and Ukrainian, Common Slavic \*g is represented by h (e.g. Kuraszkiwicz 1963:21). This variation was already noted in Fig. 3:46. As far as we know, the ar/or and g/h isoglosses in Slavic correspond. If so, the single occurrence of gorb (Fig. 3:46) would appear to be an innovation in Yiddish. If gorb were not a unique occurrence, located precisely on the border between garb and horb, it might as easily be considered a loan from Russian.

In the following map the g/h alternation is illustrated in another guise:

FIG. 3:47 'BUCKWHEAT GRUEL'. What appears to be an alternation of gr/r in Yiddish is actually the result of the normalization of the unfamiliar cluster [hr]; thus gríčene(kaše) (Pol. gryka 'buckwheat', adj. gryczany), vs. réčene(kaše) (Belor. hréčka, adj. hračány). Note the occurrence, in one instance, of the substantive xrečke 'buckwheat'



within the domain of the adjective gričene.

A comparison of Figs. 3:46-3:47 reveals two important phenomena that will emerge again and again in the forthcoming illustrations. Not only are the Yiddish isoglosses that reflect East vs. West Slavic features located considerably to the west of the Polish-East Slavic border (Fig. 3:44), but the location of Yiddish isoglosses reflecting different Slavic variations (and sometimes only different instances of the same variation) differs considerably.

3.31.13 Nasal Vowels. One of the most characteristic distinctions between East and West Slavic cognates is the retention of either consonantal or vocalic nasality in the West Slavic descendants of Proto-Slavic nasal vowels. Although other distinctions in vowel quality also appear in the following illustrations, the basic east-west division is reflected fundamentally by the presence or absence of a nasal.

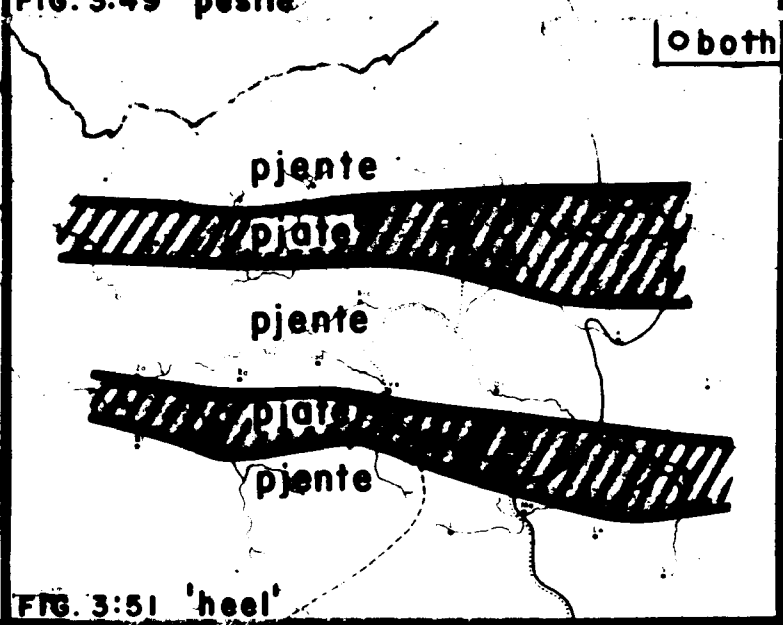
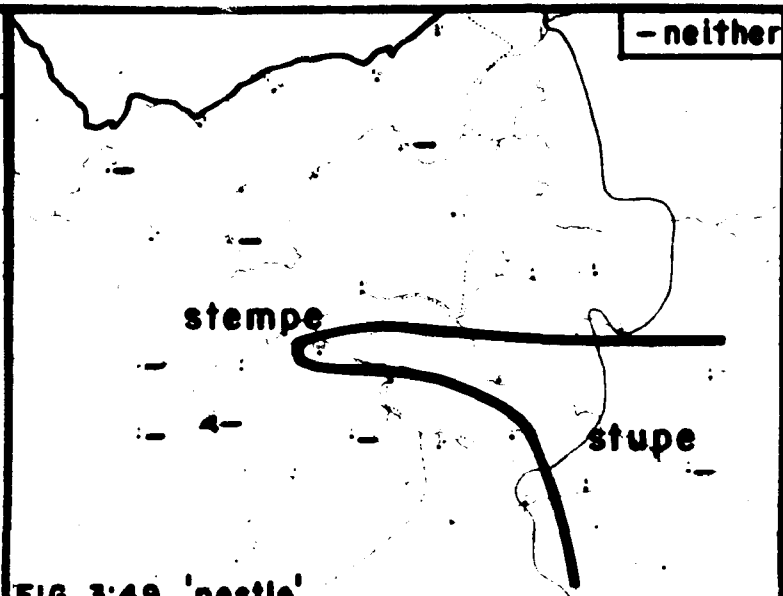
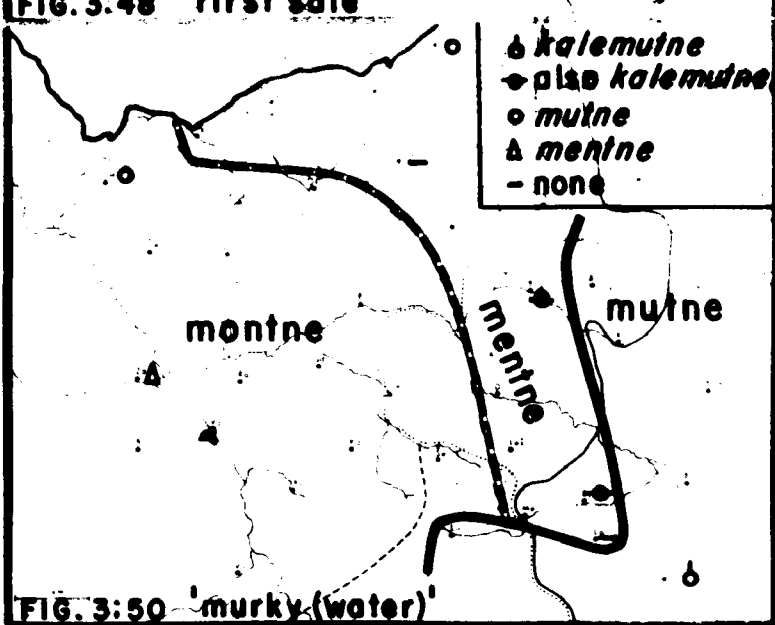
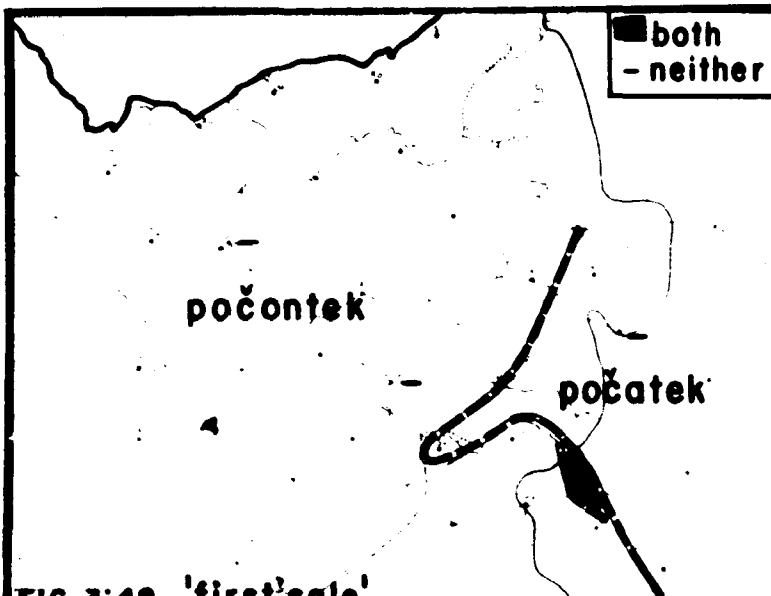
FIG. 3:48 'FIRST SALE (OF THE DAY)': počontek (Pol. początek 'beginning' vs. počatek (Belor. pačátaŭ).

FIG. 3:49 'PESTLE': stampe (Pol. step[k]a) vs. stupe (Belor. stúpa).

FIG. 3:50 'MURKY(WATER)': montne/mentne (Std. Pol. metny) vs. mutne (Belor. mútny).

FIG. 3:51 'HEEL': pjente (Pol. piet[k]a) vs. pjate (Belor. pjatá).

The distribution of alternants is much the same in three of the above: non-nasalized forms are generally restricted to the southeastern area. In Fig. 3:51, however, we note the penetration of both eastern and western forms in unexpected locations. (This distribution is particularly reminiscent of the "channels" in Figs. 3:33 and 3:34.) If we discount



this disparity, all the remaining illustrations reflect the basic East-West Slavic division. But even Fig. 3:51 hardly prepares us for the sweeping relocation of lexical variants illustrated in the following maps where we observe a complete reversal in the n and n- less alternants.

FIG. 3:52 'TO TOIL, SUFFER': menčén zix (Pol. męczyć się 'to suffer') vs. mučén zix (Belor. mučycca).

FIG. 3:53 'HORSE COLLAR': xomont (Pol. chomałto) vs. xomet (Belor. xamít).

FIG. 3:54 'NAVEL': pempik/pompik (Pol. pepek) vs. pupik (Belor. pup(ók)).

FIG. 3:55 'MUSTACHE': võ(n)ses/vonses/vonces (Std. Pol. wąsy; Belor. vusy). Whereas the previous maps depict primarily the displacement of western forms, this one suggests that if an East Slavic word for 'mustache' ever existed in Yiddish, it has been entirely eliminated in this area<sup>16</sup>. A similar displacement is illustrated by the universality of blondžén 'to wander' (Pol. blądzić).

The variants võ(n)ses/vonses/vonces may be considered successive stages in the "de-Polonization" of a loan word in the direction of native Yiddish patterns. On the one hand, nasalization is not a distinctive feature of Yiddish vowels, and the nasal segment becomes increasingly consonantal as we proceed eastward. On the other hand, original [s] following [n] or [l] tends to become affricated

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<sup>16</sup>The extension of vonces far into East Slavic territory, and the rarity of an East Slavic alternant in Yiddish, has been described by U. Weinreich (1962a:14).



FIG. 3:52 'to toil, to suffer'

mučen zix  
o both

mučen zix

≡ pempik  
// penčex  
≡ pompik

pupik

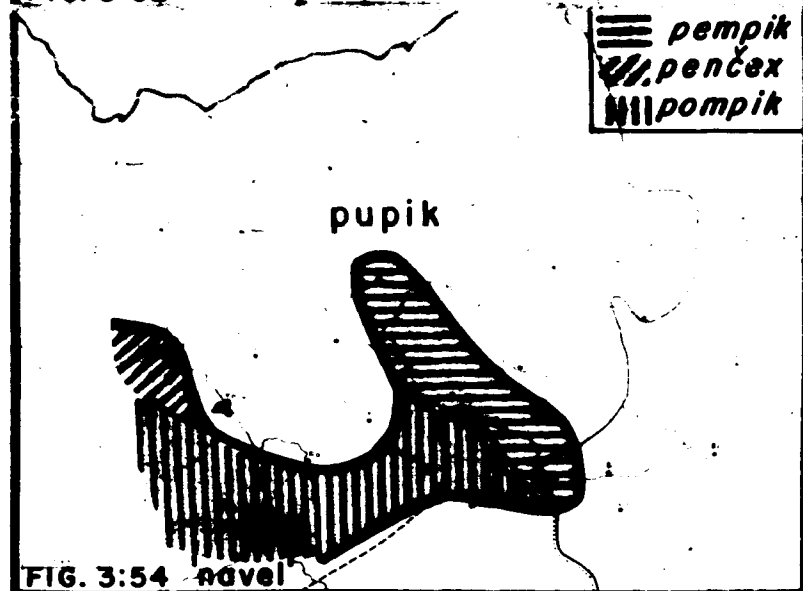


FIG. 3:54 'ravel'

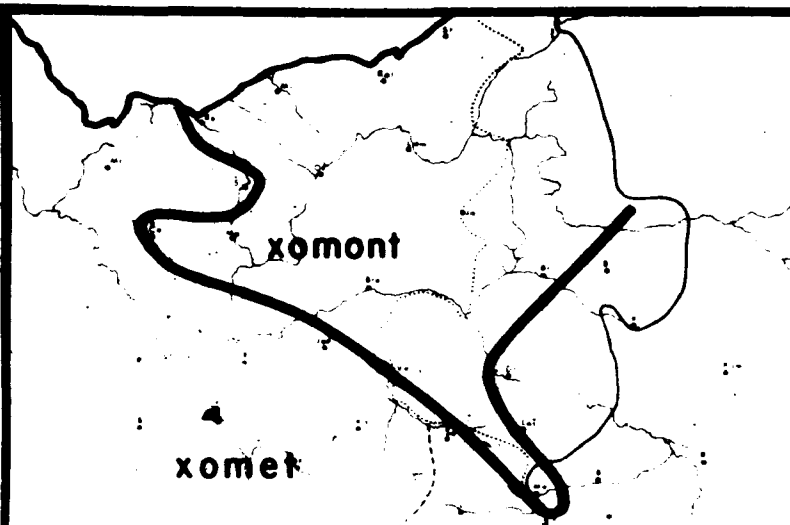


FIG. 3:53 'horse collar'

xomont

xomet

Δ pl. in-η

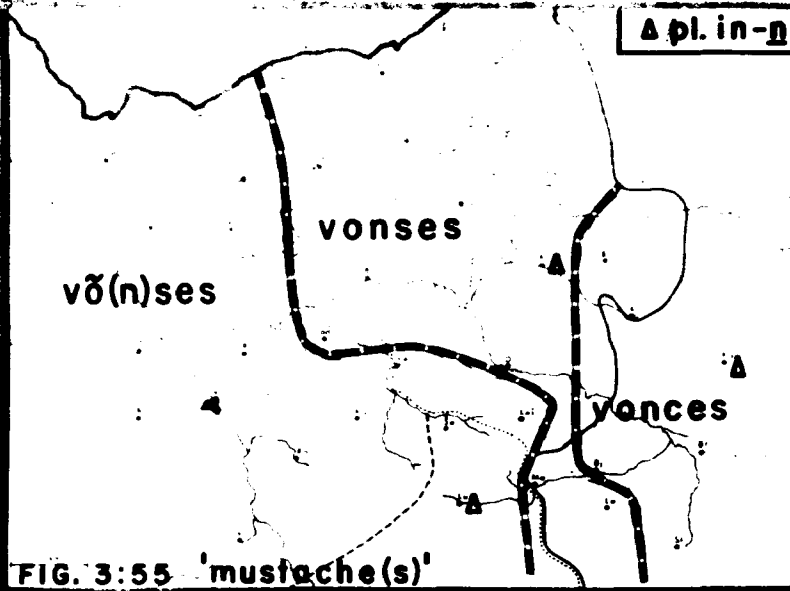


FIG. 3:55 'mustache(s)'

vonses

võ(n)ses

vonces

in the east (cf. German uns 'us', Hals 'neck': Yiddish undz, haldz).<sup>17</sup>

3.31.14 Fricativity of \*r'. We have already noted an instance of the alternation [ʒ/r] (Fig. 3:45). Several others are described below:

FIG. 3:56 '(HORSE'S) MANE': gżibe [Pol. grzywa] vs. grive [Belor. hrýva]. Note that, unlike Figs. 3:46, 3:47, no [h] variants occur. (On the problem of [-b-] vs. [-v-], see §5.27.)

FIG. 3:57 'TURNER': tokaš (Pol. tokarz) vs. toka, toker (Belor. tókar).

FIG. 3:58 'SADDLER': rimaš (Pol. rimarz) vs. rime, rimer (Belor. rýmar).

FIG. 3:59 'CARPENTER': stol'aš (Pol. stolarz) vs. stol'ar, stol'er (Belor. stól'ar).

The basic variation in the cited forms reflects the development in Polish of a hushing quality of historical \*r' (> ǣ > ǣ̃), i.e. of \*r' in certain palatal contexts.

The Yiddish alternants in -r may, of course, be derived from the predecessors of the modern Polish fricative (the development \*r' > ǣ̃ is dated in the 13th - 14th century; cf. Klemensiewicz 1955:148; that of ǣ̃ > ǣ̃̃ in the 17th; cf. Gutman 1924:383), but the present

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<sup>17</sup>It would perhaps be of interest to compare the foregoing with several pertinent aspects of Polish phonological development. Friedrich (1937:191 f.) found that "the nasal resonance everywhere demonstrates the same direction of change--from synchrony to asynchrony [i.e. ǣ̃ > vN] . . . . The tendency to the consonantization of the nasal vowel is simply inversely proportional to the tendency which produces denasalization . . . [which] is today no longer a living phonetic trend in Mazowsze. . . . The position before spirants creates more favorable conditions for denasalization . . . [which] . . . in the area of consonantal nasality . . . appears most often in the combinations es, os . . . , " i.e. [ǣ̃s > es], It is noteworthy that precisely under the conditions most favorable to denasalization in Polish, Yiddish shows no trace of a denasalized form.

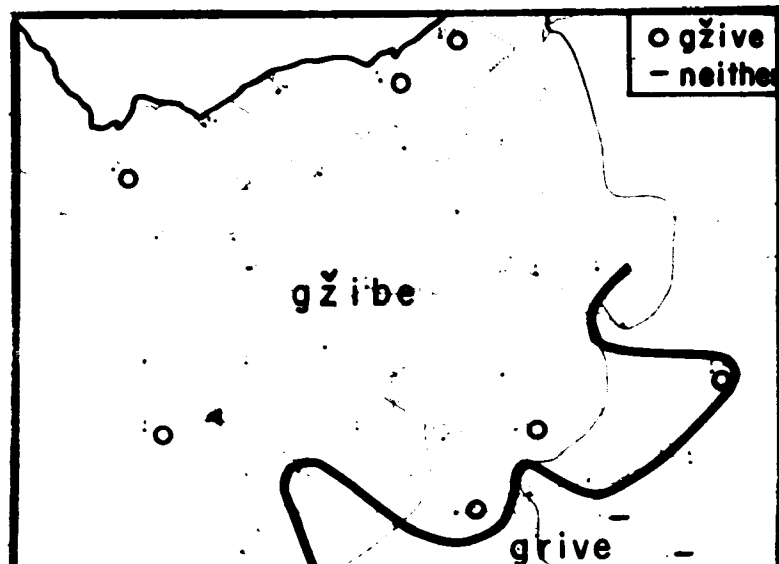


FIG. 3:56 '(horse's) mone

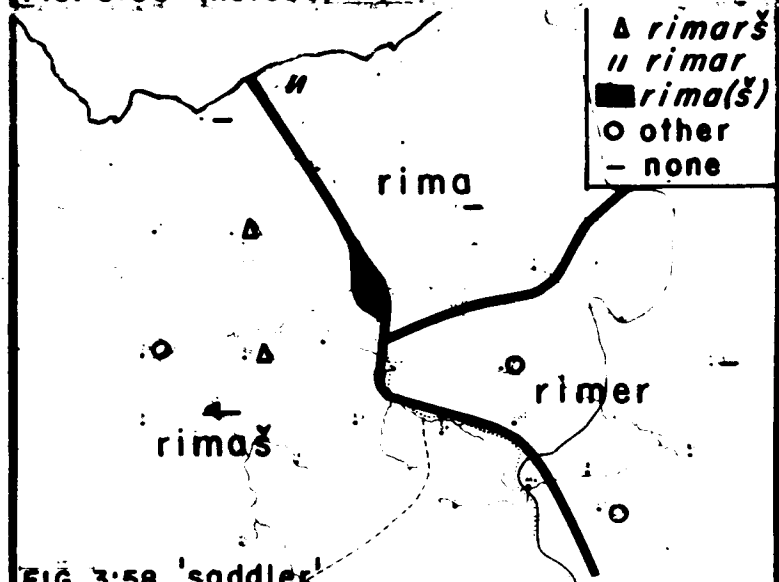


FIG. 3:58 'saddler'

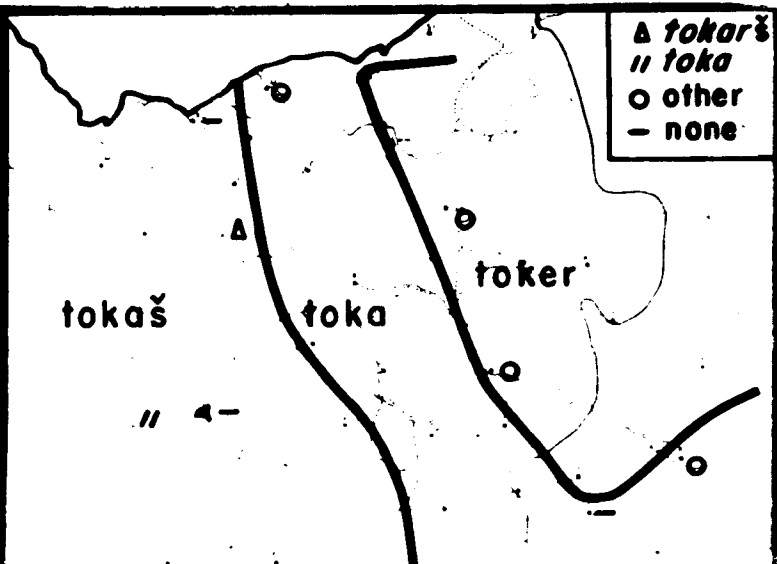


FIG. 3:57 'turner'

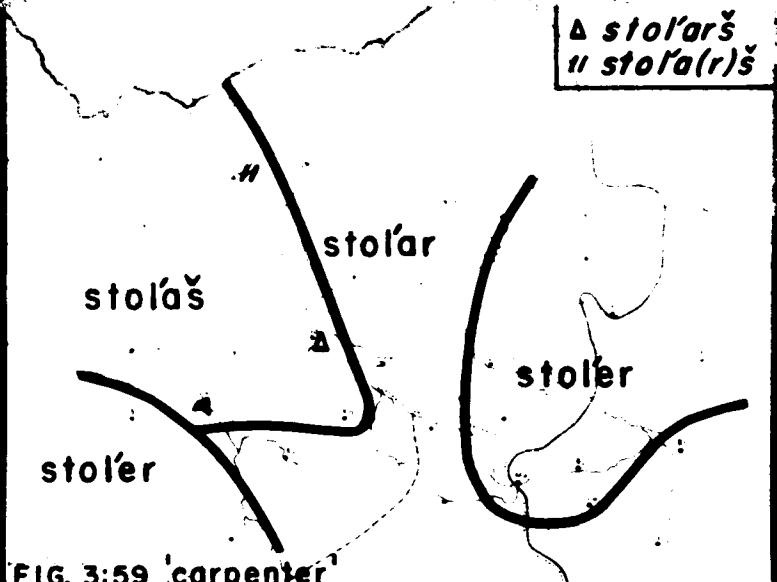


FIG. 3:59 'carpenter'



distribution is supported, roughly, by the facts of coteritorial Slavic.

While Yiddish alternants in -er, i.e. [ər], represent the normal reduction of unstressed vowels, the variants toka (Fig. 3:57) and rīma (Fig. 3:58) are unusual and do not seem to have been previously noted in the linguistic literature. We can only account for them by positing the loss of final [-r], despite the fact that r-dropping is not currently characteristic of most of the area in which these r-less forms occur (cf. §5.23). It is noteworthy that the area of this survival corresponds well with the interstitial area described in Fig. 3:25 (§3.12).

### 3.31.15 Conclusions: Regionalization of Yiddish and Slavic Words.

FIGS. 3:60-3:63 Composites of Preceding Phenomena. Composite maps of the previously illustrated alternations permit us to draw a number of conclusions relevant to the relationship between the regionalization of Yiddish and Slavic: (a) The regional distribution of Yiddish lexical variants of Slavic origin, in general, reflects the traditional east-west discontinuity in Slavic; (b) it is nevertheless clear that the location of the discontinuity in Yiddish lies considerably to the west of its location in Slavic; (c) though degrees of correspondence among individual isoglosses are clearly discernible, each Slavic loan word in Yiddish has its own unique distribution; (d) The major clustering tendency of the Yiddish isoglosses occurs in the southeast and corresponds closely with the distribution of other, not-necessarily-Slavic southeastern "specialties"

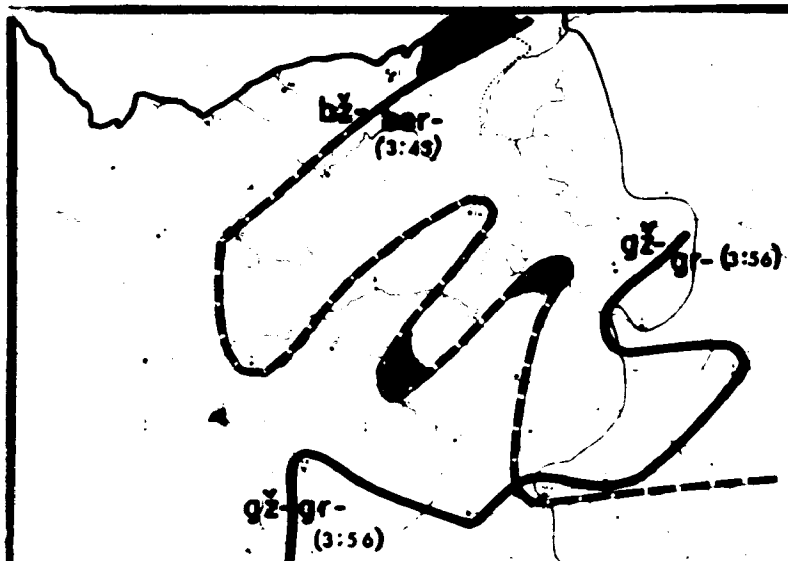


FIG. 3:60 COMPOSITE OF FIGS. 3:45, 3:56

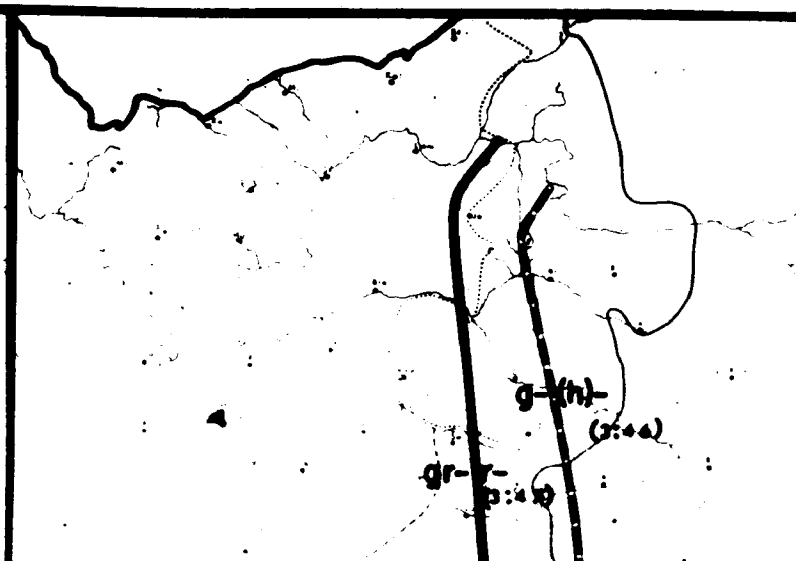


FIG. 3:61 COMPOSITE OF FIGS. 3:46-3:47

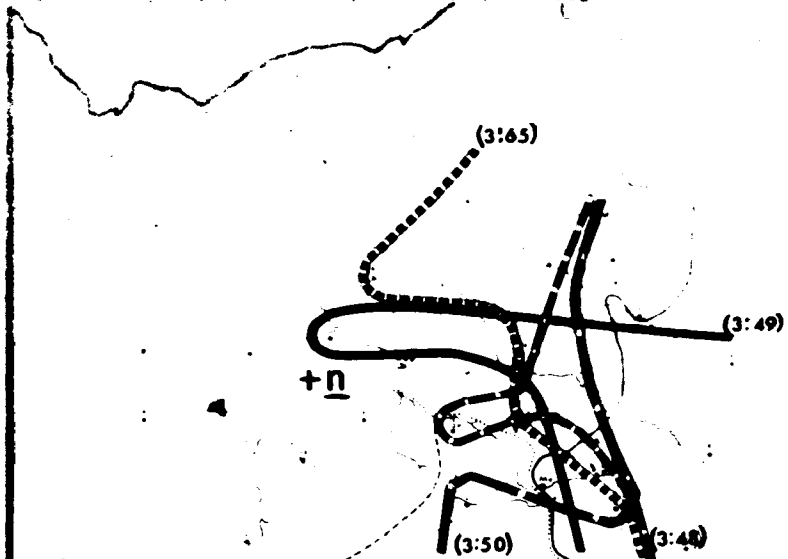


FIG. 3:62 COMPOSITE OF FIGS. 3:48-3:50, 3:65

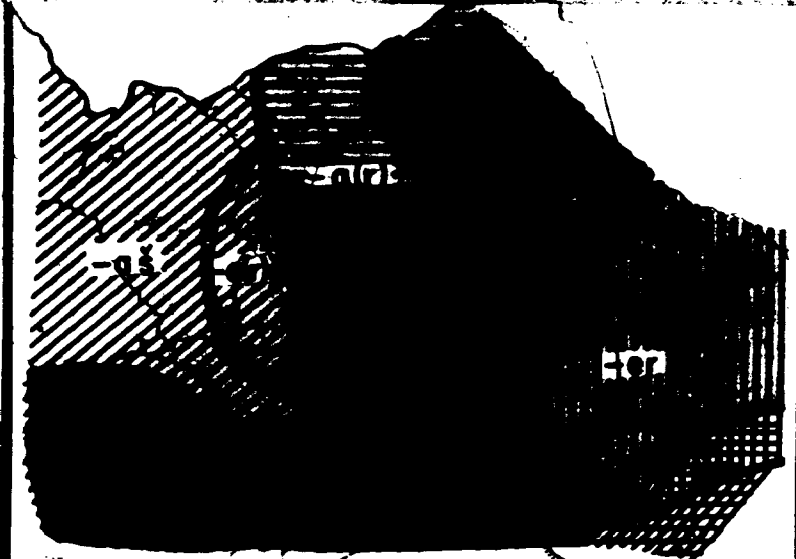


FIG. 3:63 COMPOSITE OF FIGS. 3:57-3:59

(cf. Fig. 3:35); (e) there is rarely any discernible congruence between these isoglosses and the major isogloss bundles 1, 2, and 3; (f) the general location of the isoglosses between the Yiddish lexical variants of Slavic origin, reinforced particularly by the major relocations illustrated in Fig. 3:51-3:54, implies the existence of a significant westward "push" in East European Jewish society, in some way compatible with the eastward movement reflected by Isoglosses 1, 2, and 3; (g) that the diffusion of Slavicisms in Yiddish was not always westward is, however, apparent from Fig. 3:55.

3.31.2 Intra-Polish Isoglosses. In addition to the basic east-west variation in Slavic origin vocabulary, Yiddish also reflects some of the intra-Polish dialect differences as well. Some of these distinctions have already been illustrated: mentne/montne 'murky' (Fig. 3:50), pempik/pompik 'navel' (Fig. 3:54) and vōses/vonses 'mustache' (Fig. 3:55). Unfortunately we have no information pertaining to the actual distribution of the corresponding variants in Polish.<sup>18</sup>

The following maps illustrate Polish dialectal phenomena, other than nasal-vowel alternation, that are reflected in Yiddish as well:

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<sup>18</sup> In this regard, Friedrich comments (1937:195): "The mixture of nasals is a rather lively phenomenon in Mazowsze and appears in the entire area. Thus it is impossible to determine the extension of such crossings as stompka, pšerombel//stempka, pšerembel . . . xomonta//xomenta . . . wossy//wessy and many others."

FIG. 3:64 'SUSPENDERS': šelkes/šolkes (Std. Pol. szelki).<sup>19</sup>

The form šolkes apparently illustrates a Polish dialectal variant (cf. Karłowicz s.v.).

FIG. 3:65 'GUMS': (d)žonsles/vjosles (Std. Pol. dziąsle).

North of the Vistula, Polish b'j > b'ý, vj > vý, thus biały 'white' and wiara 'faith' become [b'ýaly, výara] (cf. Urbančzyk 1962:34). In the center of the area the spirant is even further fronted: [bžaly] 'white', while in the center of Mazovia the labial spirant may disappear completely: žara, ýara] (cf. *ibid.*: Map 6, isogloss 4).

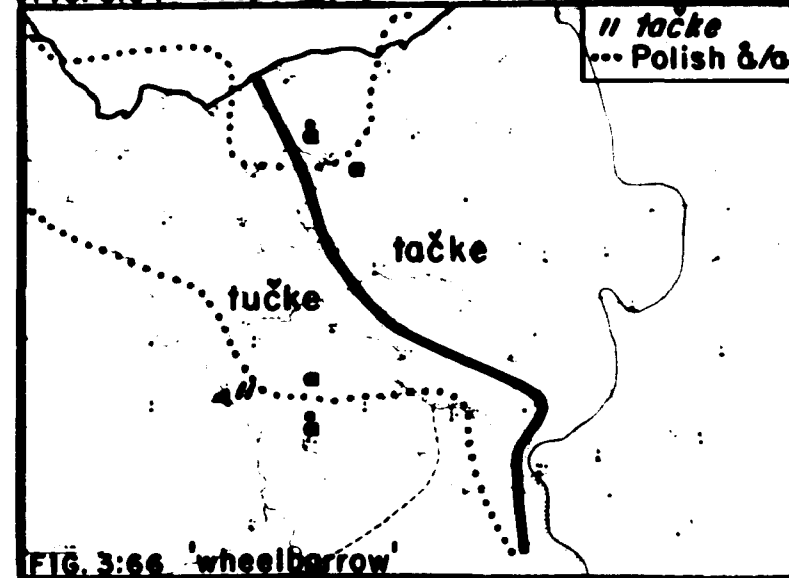
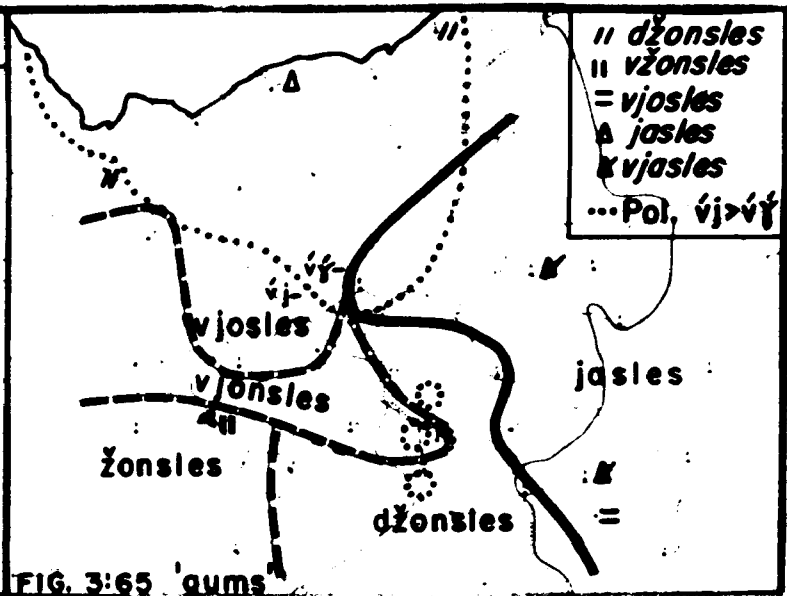
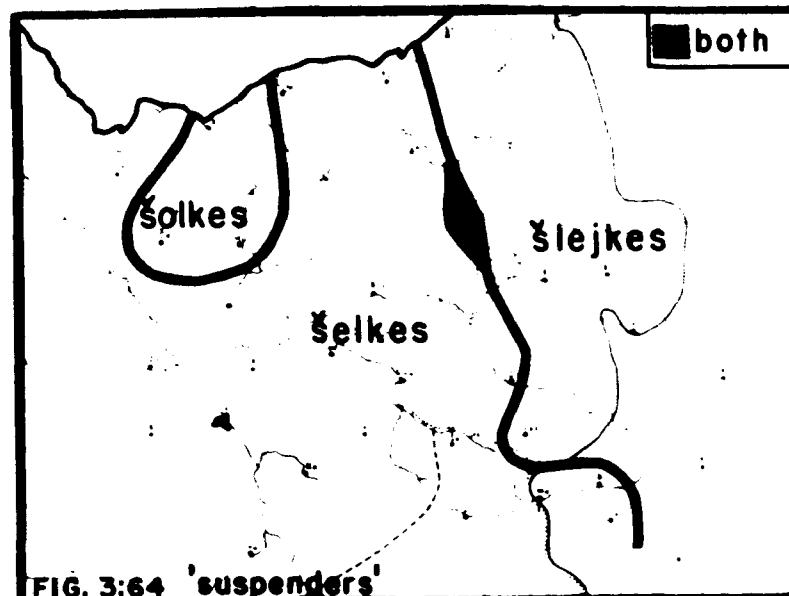
This development suggests the origin of Yiddish vjosles 'gums' in the hypercorrection of (d)žonsles. (On the denasalization džonsles > vjosles cf. fn. 17.)

FIG. 3:66 'WHEELBARROW': tučke/tacke (Std. Pol. taczka, dial. [táčka/točka]). In most Polish dialects, Proto-Slavic \*ā is distinguished from \*a, either as a separate phoneme ā, or--more commonly--as o merged with o < \*o (Urbančzyk 1962:26). Curiously, most of the area under study here belongs to those marginal dialect regions in which \*ā has been retained as a (*ibid.*: Map 1, isogloss c).

In a few loan words from Polish (kjut < kwiat 'flower', ščuf < szczaw 'sorrel', and place names such as Kuliš, Kruke, Vurke, Turne < Kalisz, Kraków, Warka, Tarnów) Standard Polish a is rendered in

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<sup>19</sup>The consistent occurrence of initial [š] in all of the Yiddish variants of Polish szelki should be contrasted with the outcroppings in Yiddish of Polish mazurzenie depicted in the variants of Polish szyszka 'pine cone' (Fig. 3:39): siškes/siskes. (The alternant šuškes with [u] rather than [i] is probably the result of hypercorrection; cf. §5.12.1.).



## INTRA-POLISH ISOGLOSSES

Central Yiddish as [u]. We can only explain these words as having entered Yiddish from Polish dialects in which they have o and having been subjected to the regular o > u shift in Yiddish (§5.12.3). They are obviously among the older Polish loanwords in the language.

A case in point is the illustrated word for 'wheelbarrow'. As in Fig. 3:48 we find no evidence of Polish *mazurzenie* in these alternants (but cf. above fn. 19 and Fig. 5:28 below).

In a few cases we are fortunately able to draw on the results of current Polish dialect research that permit direct comparison of Yiddish and Polish variation in the same lexical items. In the following illustrations the Polish alternants and the extent of Yiddish disagreement is indicated on the face of the maps:

FIG. 3:67 'COLT' (MAGP I, 40). In citing the Polish variants we ignore distinctions in the initial consonant. Thus we compare Polish źrebiak/żrebiek with Yiddish žrebak/žrebek, from the point of view of the unstressed vowel.

FIG. 3:68 'SPRING' (season) (MAGP II, 92). Polish wiosna/wiesna; Yiddish vjosne/vjesne.

FIG. 3:69 'LAKE' (MAGP IV, 198). Polish jezioro/ozioro; Yiddish jéžere/óžere. The phenomenon depicted here also represents an East-West Slavic alternation. In East Slavic \*je- prehistorically became o- in a number of words, whereas Polish retained je- (Kuraszkievicz 1963:19). It is interesting to note, however, that in Belorussian, o- takes on a prothetic v, while in Russian it does not (ibid.:25). It is not necessary to assume, however, that the relatively widespread Yiddish forms in o- are the result of Russian influence. Recent

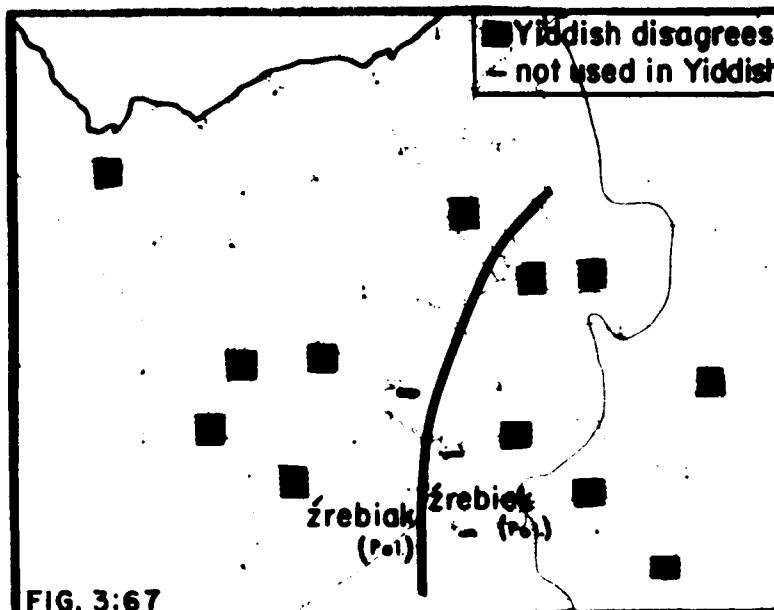


FIG. 3:67

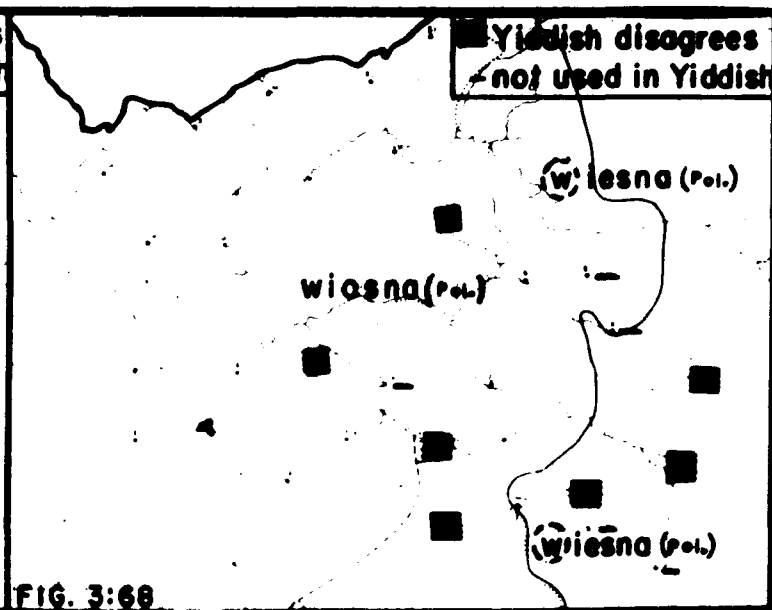


FIG. 3:68

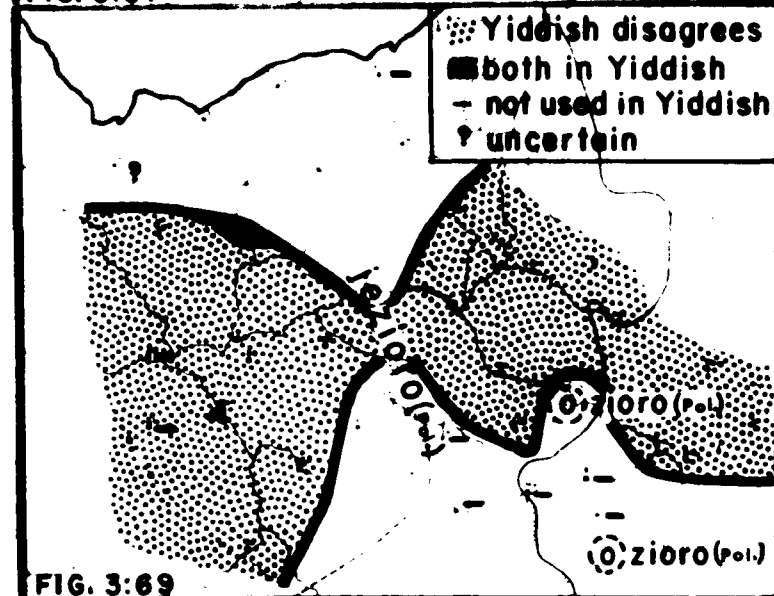


FIG. 3:69

## POLISH VS. YIDDISH

FIG. 3:67 UNSTRESSED VOWEL  
IN 'COLT'

FIG. 3:68 VOWEL IN 'SPRING'

FIG. 3:69 VOWEL IN 'LAKE'

findings of Belorussian dialect investigations (DABM, Map 47) indicate that forms without prothetic v- (óžera) are widespread in southwestern Belorussia as well.

The distribution of the eastern form óžere in Yiddish, again suggests the "channels" of Figs. 3:33-3:34.

Another direct comparison can be made with information provided by Nitsch (1955:88, map 1). Among the many regional Polish designations for 'buckwheat', gryka covers all of our area with the exception of one or two communities in the southeast where grecka prevails.<sup>20</sup> Of particular interest is the fact that in the Polish of this area, neither [hrečka] nor [rečka] occurs. The Yiddish variation between [gr-] and [r-] (Fig. 3:47) must therefore be due to the introduction of g-less forms from outside the area.

Each of these cases again reveals the sui generis distribution of Yiddish reflexes of Slavic-origin words.

3.31.3. The Problem of Stress. Regional variation in the stress of trisyllabic words is probably less a geographic problem than a chronological one. As we have illustrated below, by far the more predominant pattern in Central Yiddish runs counter to the penultimate stress pattern in Standard Polish.

FIG. 3:70 'FLOOR': pódlege/podlóge (Pol. podłoga). 'SOLE': pódešve/podéšve (Pol. podeszwa).

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<sup>20</sup>The universality of the initial [g] in this case appears to reflect the explanation by Kuraszkiwicz (cf. fn. 15) concerning the manner in which Polish and East Slavic vocabularies have "grown closer to each other".

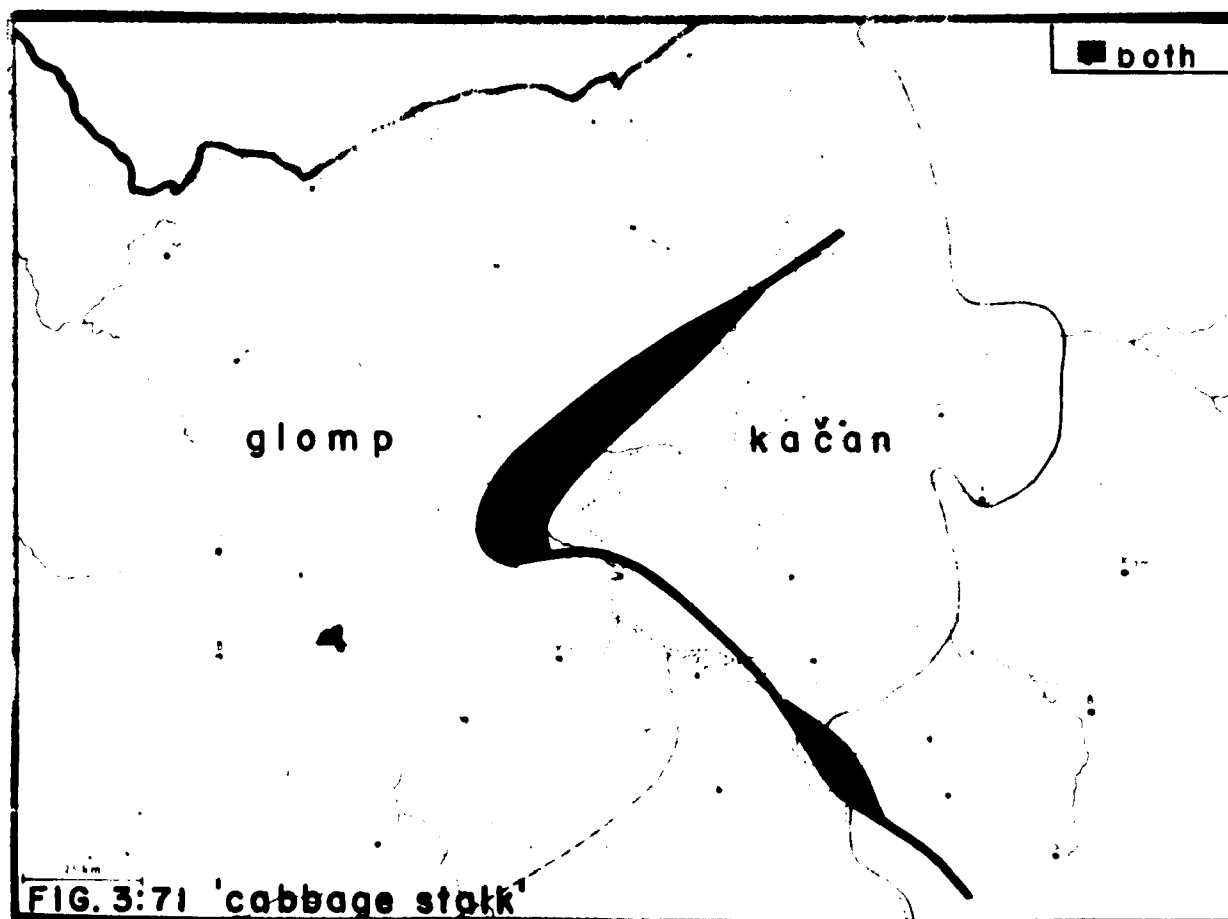
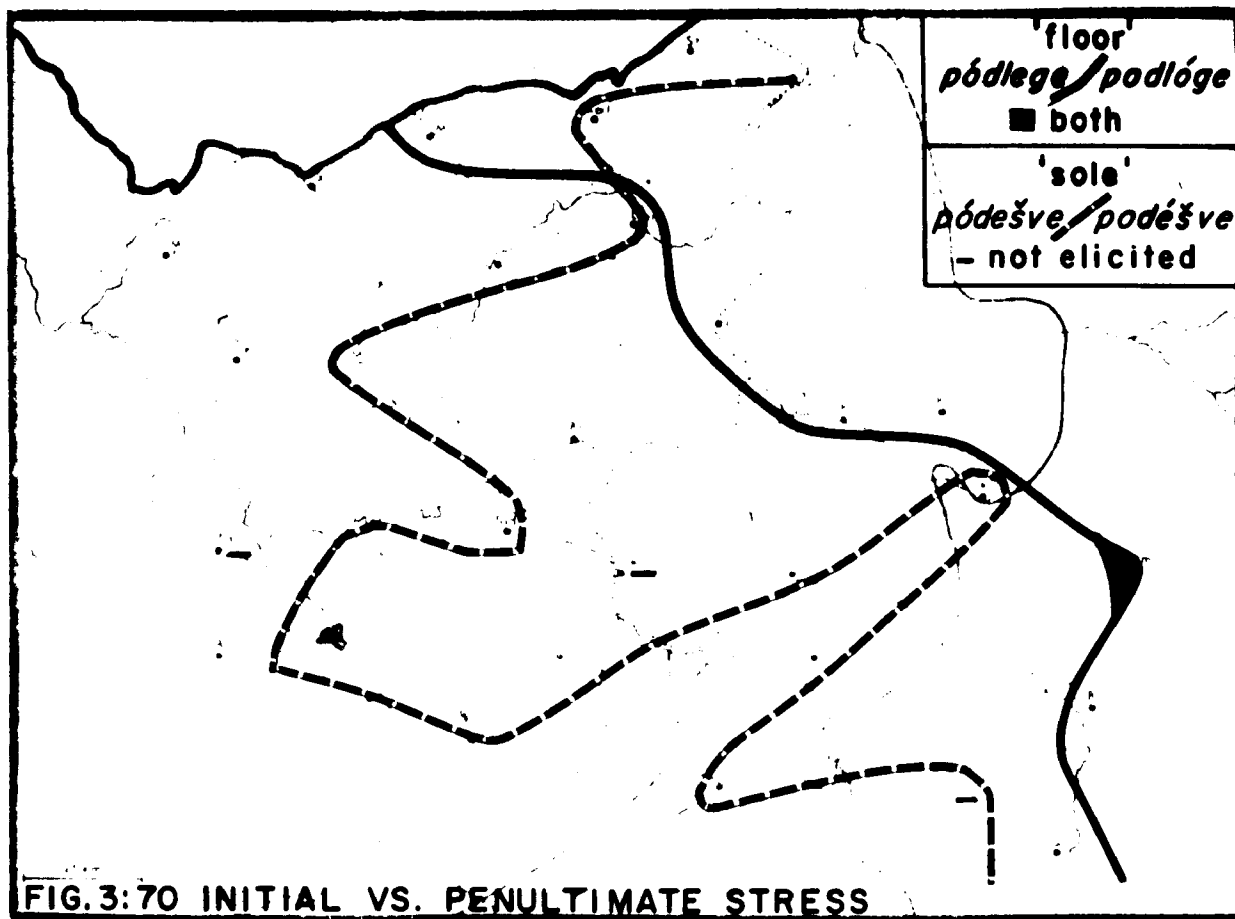


Other words alternate in similar fashion: kápete/kapóte 'coat' (Pol. kapota), pódkeves/podkóves 'horse-shoes' (Pol. podkowa); some receive initial stress in Yiddish even in East Slavic territory: lópete 'bread-shovel' (Pol. łopata Ukr. lopáta), krópeve 'nettles' (Ukr. kropyvá, Belor. krapivá).

Jakobson (1953:75) proposes that Czech, with which Yiddish speakers had early contact, and early Polish, in which initial stress is presumed to have been the rule, may have continued to serve as a model for the treatment of Slavic origin words in Yiddish. Assuming the influence at least of early Polish, it would appear that this pattern for integrating loan words, regardless of their stress in the source language, did in fact remain productive even in the case of new words in Polish territory. Words in East Slavic territory that retain initial stress may also be considered old borrowings. On the other hand, words with penultimate stress in the east may either be new loans or reborrowings from Standard Polish. In the east, contact with Standard Polish was, in fact, more likely than with Polish dialectal forms since the most influential Polish settlers there were apparently of the nobility and the clergy.

### 3.32 Yiddish Reflections of Slavic Lexical Isoglosses

The unpredictable spread of Slavic lexical borrowings in Yiddish was already implicit in our discussion of Fig. 3:25 and in §3.11.1 (al'ker). In the former we saw that 'to button up' was rendered by (far)špil'en (Belor. zašpilíc') in the east, and (far)kneplen (cf. MHG knopf 'a button') in the west, while the related substantives; špil'ke 'pin' and knepl 'button', were universal. Upon



this evidence alone we might predict that when we consider the distribution of Slavic lexical borrowings (as distinct from lexicalized phonological variants) in Yiddish, we will again find a considerable discrepancy between the location of the isoglosses in both languages. Only in one case, however, does the state of Slavic lexical geography enable us to present precise comparative data (cf. Figs. 3:75-3:77 below).

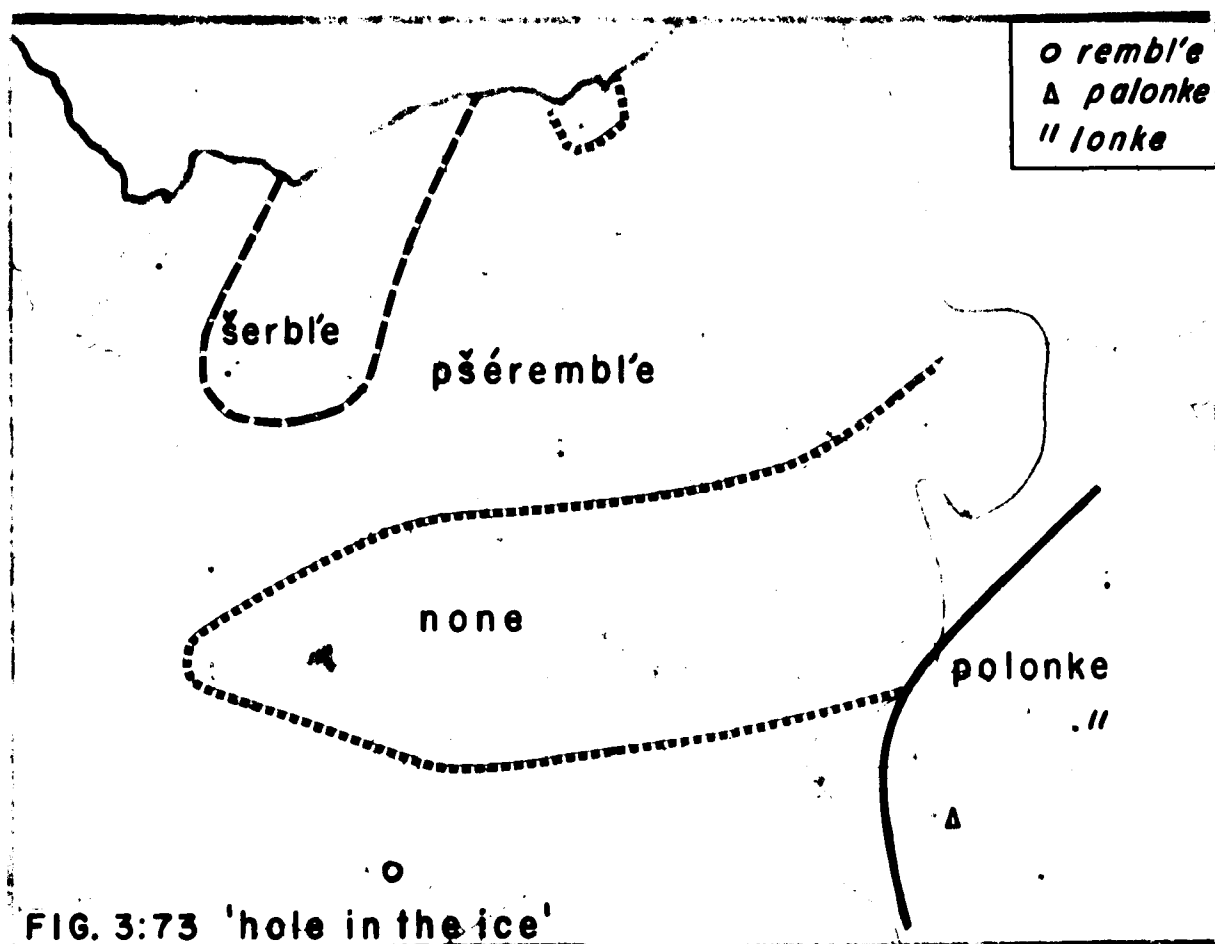
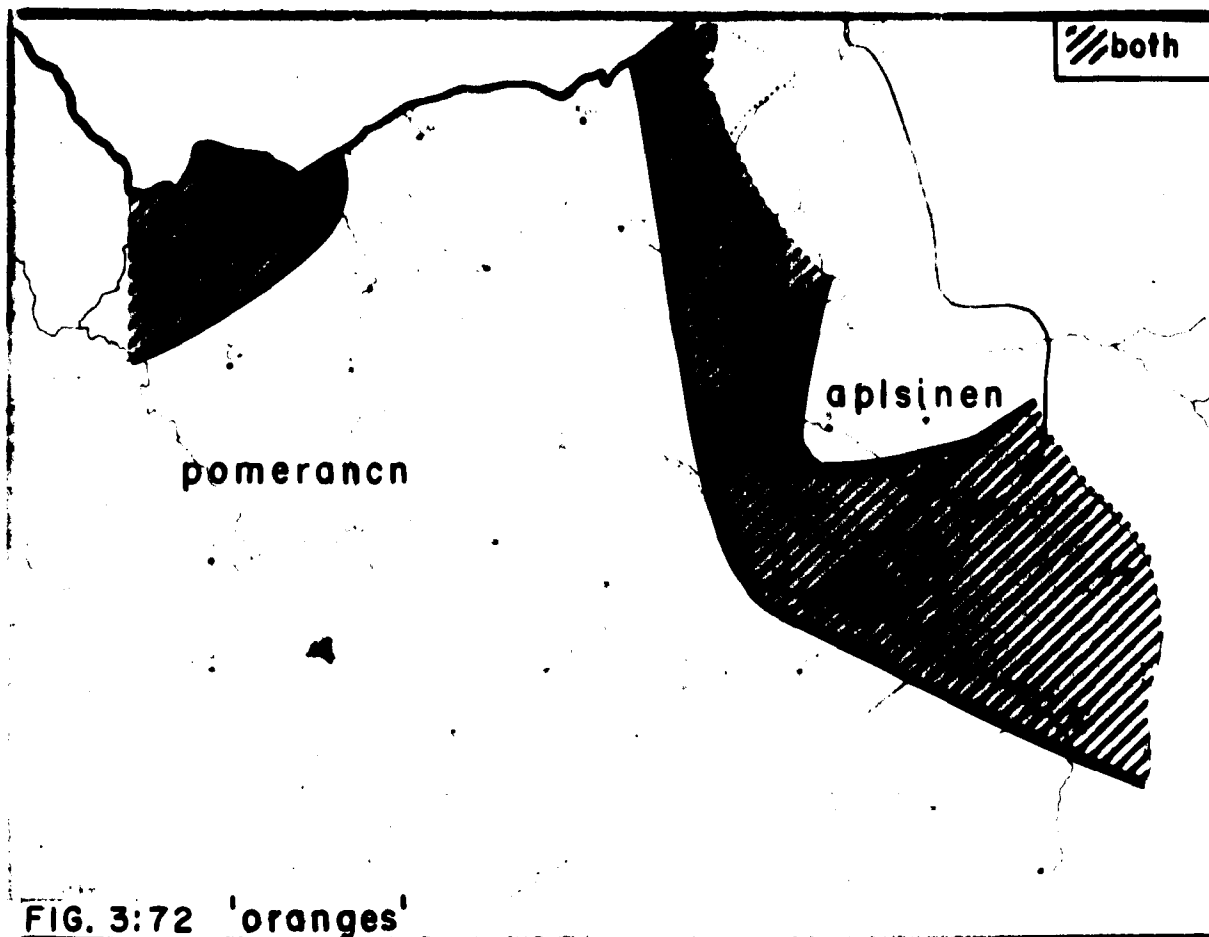
FIG. 3:71 'CABBAGE STALK': glomp (Pol. głąb) vs. kačan (Pol. kaczan, Belor. Ukr. kačán). The fact that of the two, the former is recorded only in Polish, is suggestive of its western origin in Yiddish.

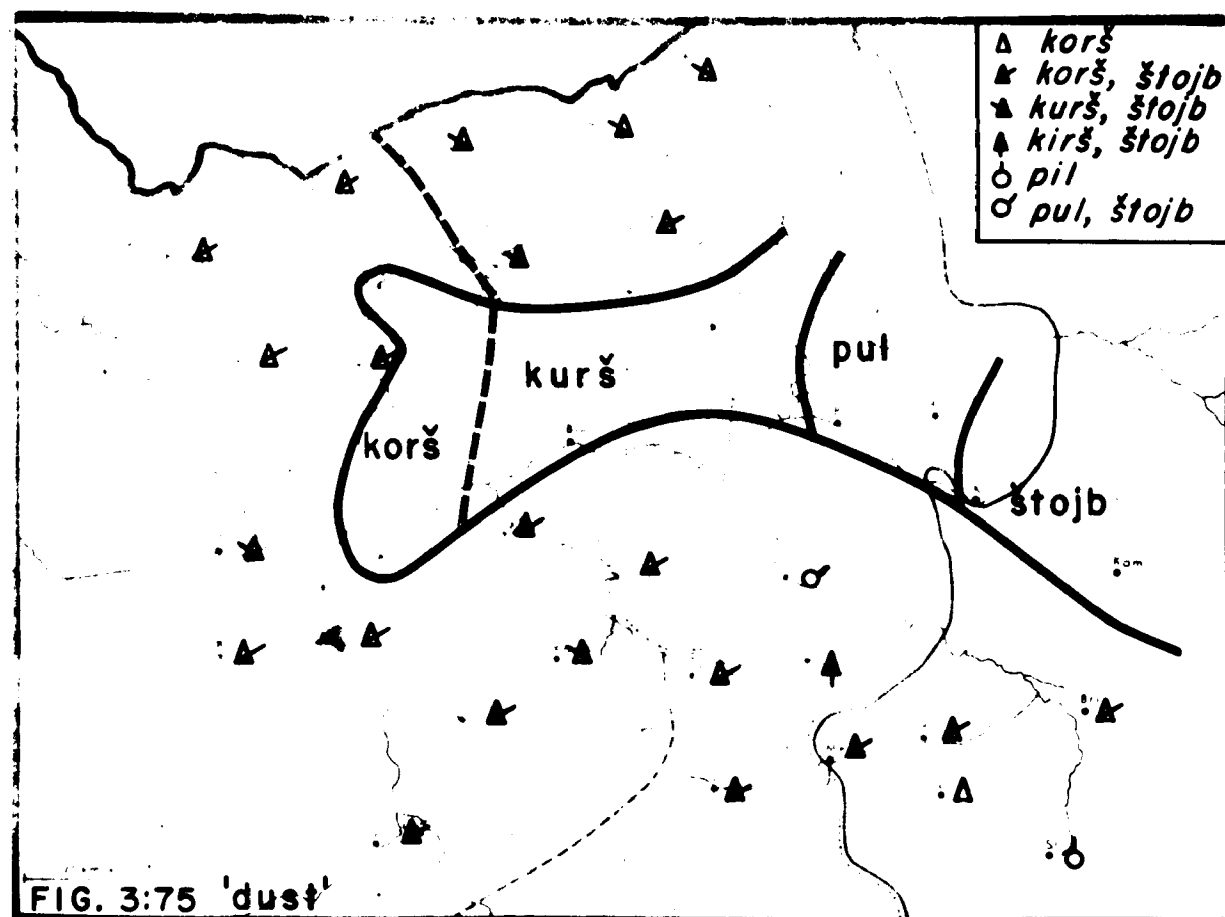
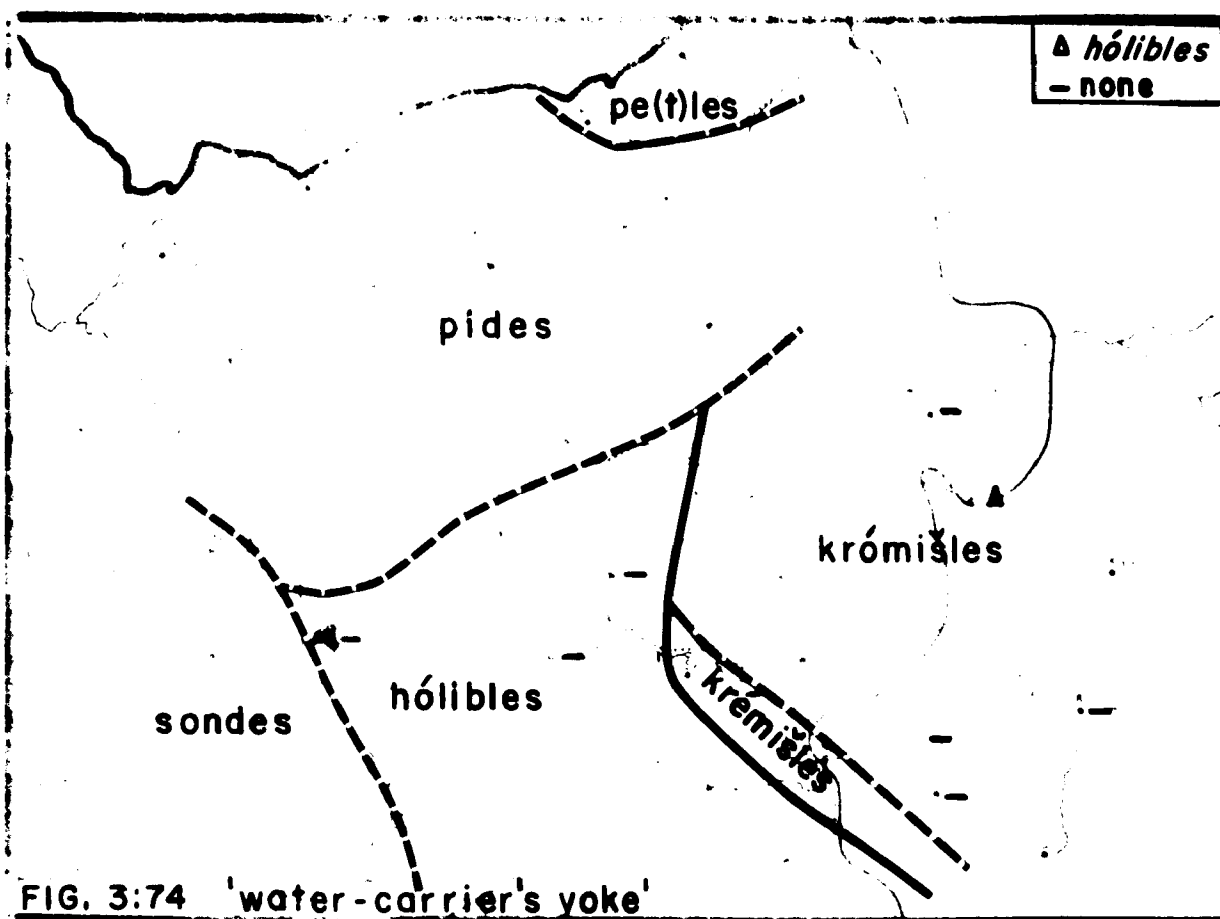
FIG. 3:72 'ORANGES': (po)merancn (Pol. sg. pomarańcza) vs. aplsinen (Belor. sg. pańjaránec; recently apel'sín from Russian). The recency and origin of apel'sín in Belorussian suggests that this figure might best be considered under §3.33 below.

FIG. 3:73 'HOLE (IN THE ICE)': (pšé)remblé/šerbl'e (Pol. przerębel/przerębla) vs. (pa)lonke/polonke (Belor. palónka; cf. RBS s.v. prórub'; Ukr. (o)polónka).

FIG. 3:74 'WATER-CARRIER'S YOKE': sondes/pides (dial. Pol. szońdy/sady, pydy; cf. Karłowicz s.v.) vs. (h)ólibles/krómisles (Pol. hołobla < Ukr. holóbl'a 'shaft'; Ukr. korómýslo 'yoke').

FIG. 3:75 'DUST': kurš (Pol. kurz [kuš]) vs. pul (Pol. pył, Belor. pyl). While the latter form occurs in Polish as well, it





appears to be the only Belorussian word for dust.<sup>21</sup>

FIGS. 3:76-3:78 'CEILING'.<sup>22</sup> Among the variety of Yiddish designations for 'ceiling', some are of Germanic, some of Slavic origin (Fig. 3:76). The limits of the Germanic forms balkn/baltn/belik (cf. MHG balke 'beam') correspond rather well with Isogloss 3 (cf. Fig. 3:16). Here we are concerned, however, with the variants of Polish pulap (Fig. 3:77; MAGP I,8).

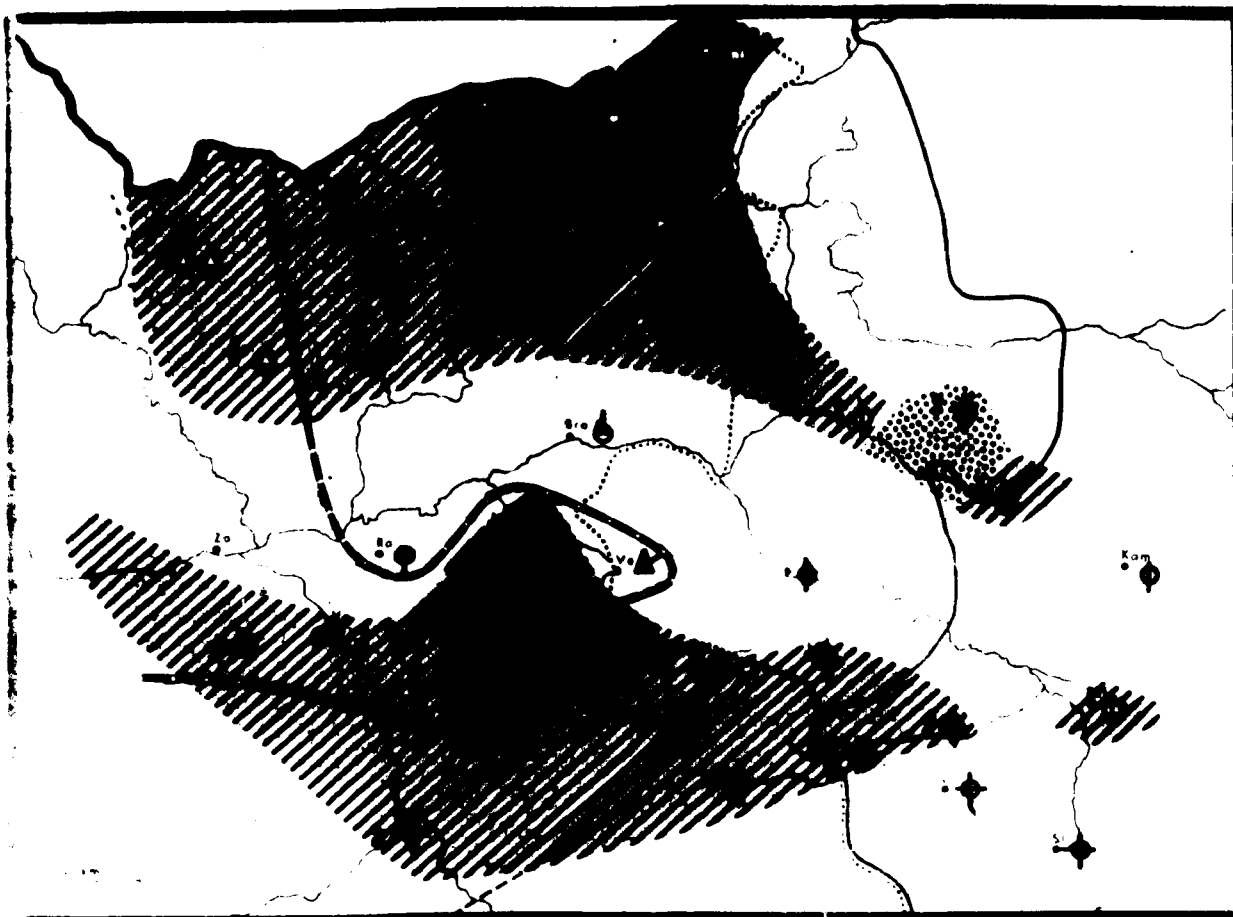
Disregarding the two eastern towns that are excluded from the Polish dialect map, we find polap in the east, pulap in the west, and pulep in the north, beyond the limits of our map. The Yiddish variants may differ from the Polish either in the first (stressed) vowel, in the unstressed vowel of the second syllable, or in both. Abstracting from the Yiddish phonological variation [u~i], we find (Fig. 3:78) that in the north, Yiddish and Polish forms agree in all respects, while in parts of the south, they agree in none. Elsewhere, agreement is restricted to the stressed vowel only. Note that no Polish variant occurs with unstressed [o], while the Polish form with unstressed [e] occurs entirely outside of the area.

This comparison reinforces the conclusion suggested by the

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<sup>21</sup>The lowering of [u] to [o] before [r], as illustrated by the Yiddish phonological variant [korš], suggests that this is a loan word of considerable age (cf. §5.13.511). The retention of [r] in the final cluster further supports this theory (cf. Figs. 3:57-3:59). The location of the [i] alternants [kirš] and [pil] can be compared with Figs. 5:53 and 5:2).

<sup>22</sup>For a preliminary culture-historical interpretation of the words for 'ceiling' in Yiddish see U. Weinreich (1962b:29ff.).



Δ *balkn*

⤴ *baltn*

⬠ *belik*

Limit of  
Germanic  
forms

○ *pulap*

● *pilap*

◌ *pulop*

◌ *pilop*

⊕ *polop*

◆ *polep*

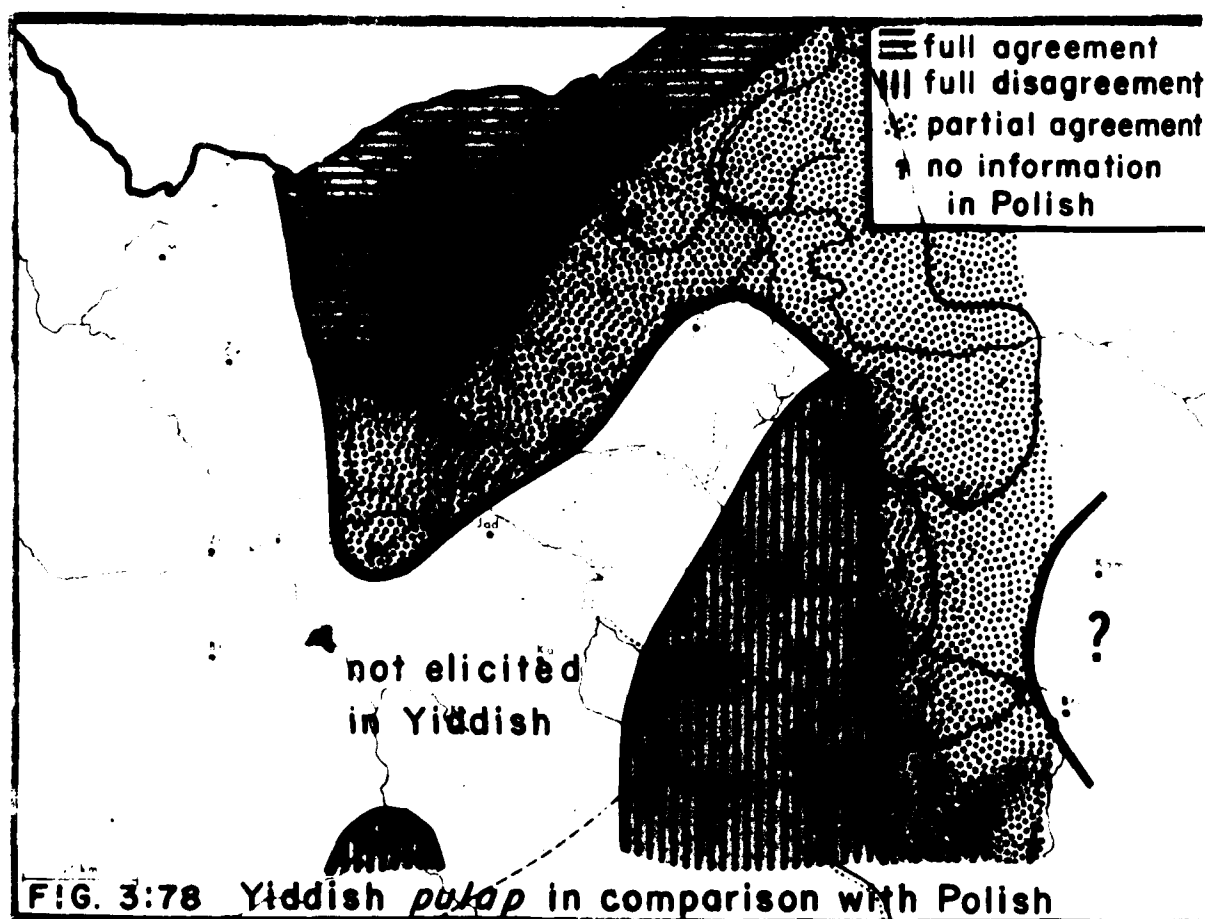
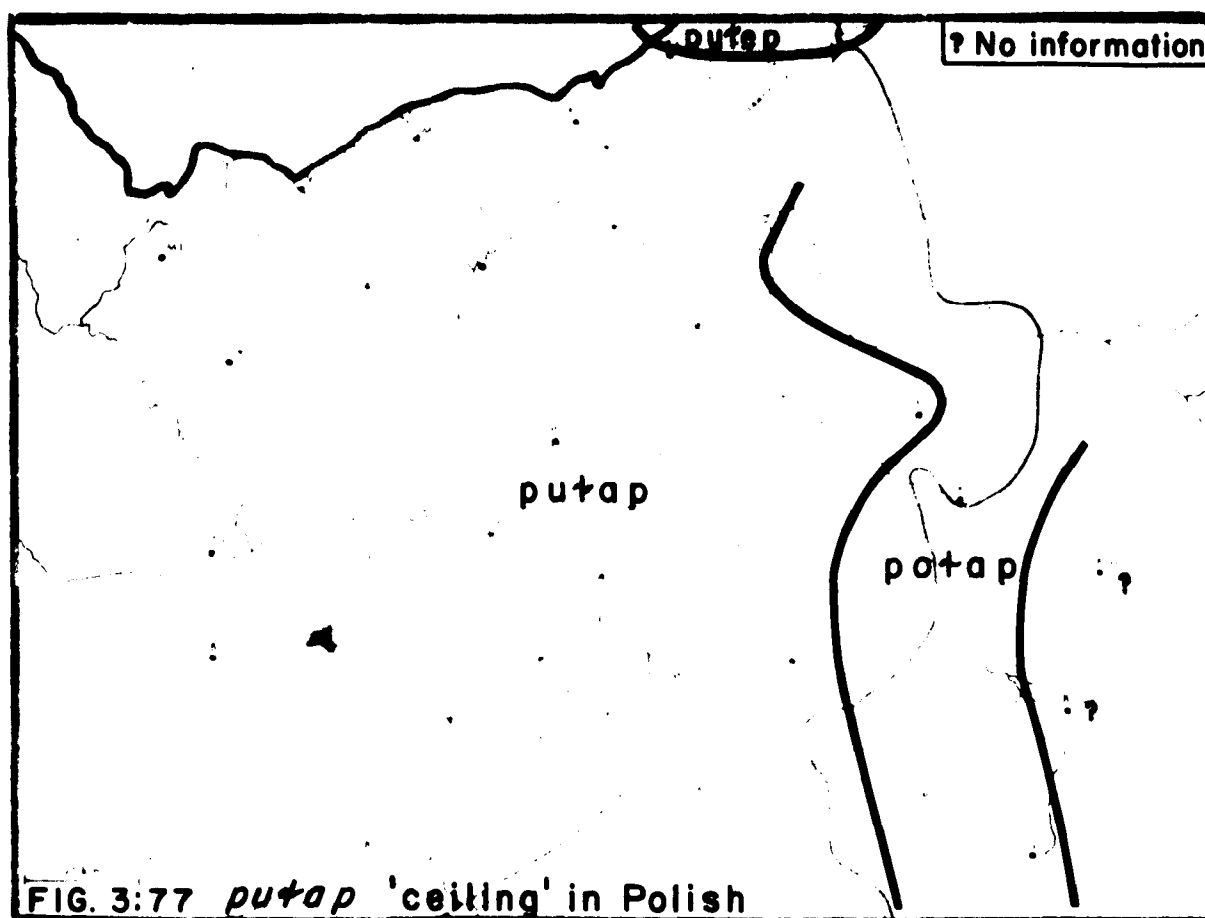
◌ *pilep*

□ *stel'e*

/// *sufit*

⊞ rejects *sufit* but uses it later

FIG. 3:76 'ceiling' in Yiddish





evidence of similar comparisons in §3.31.2. Where our knowledge of the Slavic data is adequate to permit direct comparison with lexical variation in Yiddish, we are increasingly impressed by the distinctiveness of the Yiddish distributions. We look forward to the future findings of Slavic lexical geography to strengthen this impression.

### 3.33 Russian Influence

Russian influence on Yiddish has been relatively meager,<sup>23</sup> yet some lexical items have entered the language even as far west as our area. It would be of interest to learn whether the same words are current in coteritorial Polish as well.

FIG. 3:79 opasne 'DANGEROUS' (Russ. opásno).

FIG. 3:80 (sax[er])maróžene 'ICE CREAM' (Russ. moróženoje 'ice').

FIG. 3:81 nol 'ZERO' (Russ. nol).

FIG. 3:82 kartin(k)e 'PICTURE' (Russ. kartínka, Belor. karcínka).

FIG. 3:83 skučne 'BORING, SAD' (Russ. skučno).

FIG. 3:84 Composite of Figs. 3:78-3:82.

We find it surprising that despite the apparent diffuseness of the individual distributions, there is a high degree of consistency in their composite picture. The isoglosses tend to cluster at various points, though none approximate the major Isoglosses 1, 2, and 3.

Perhaps the most important feature of this data is that the terminus a quo of its introduction into Yiddish can be proposed with relative certainty. Significant contact between Russian and Yiddish could only have begun, at the earliest, towards the end of the 18th

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. M. Weinreich (1956b:629f.).

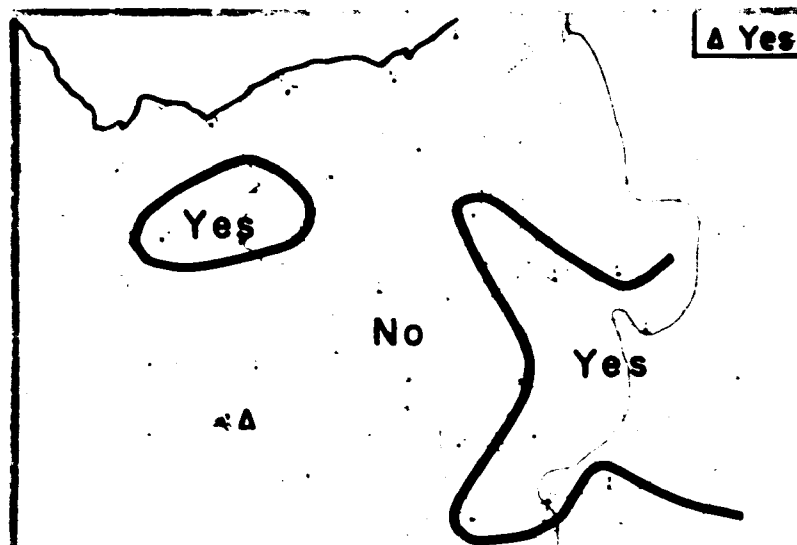


FIG. 3:79 *opasne* 'dangerous'

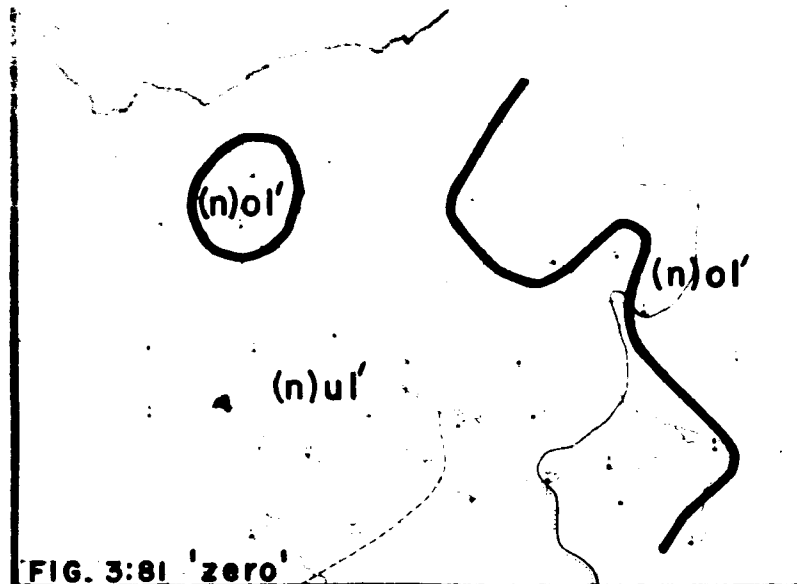


FIG. 3:81 'zero'

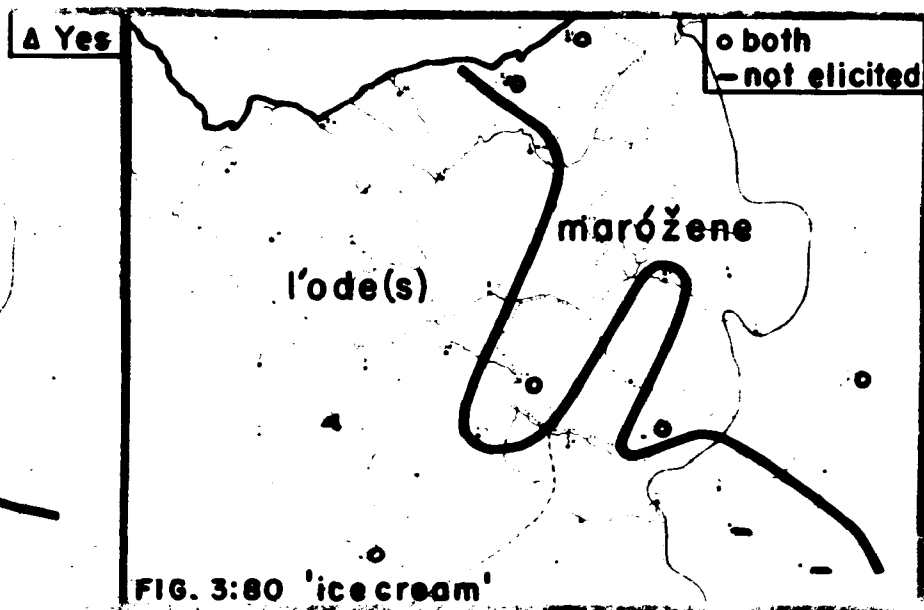


FIG. 3:80 'ice cream'

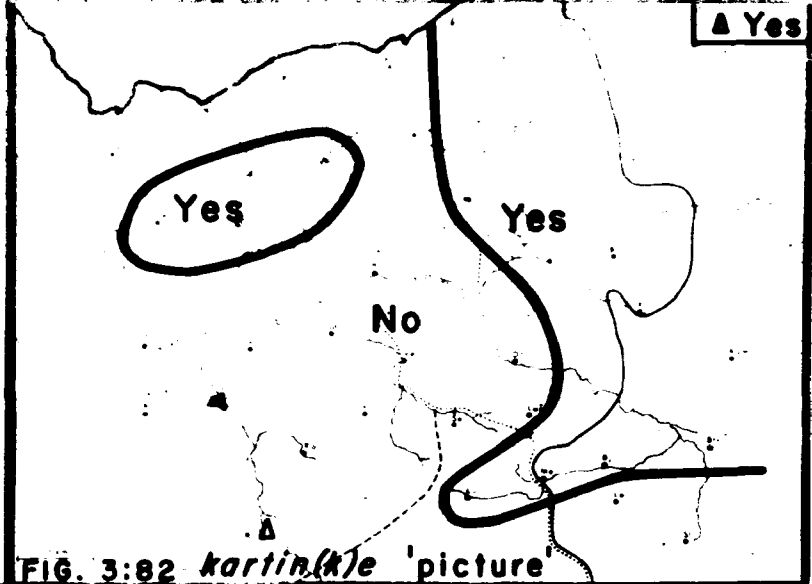
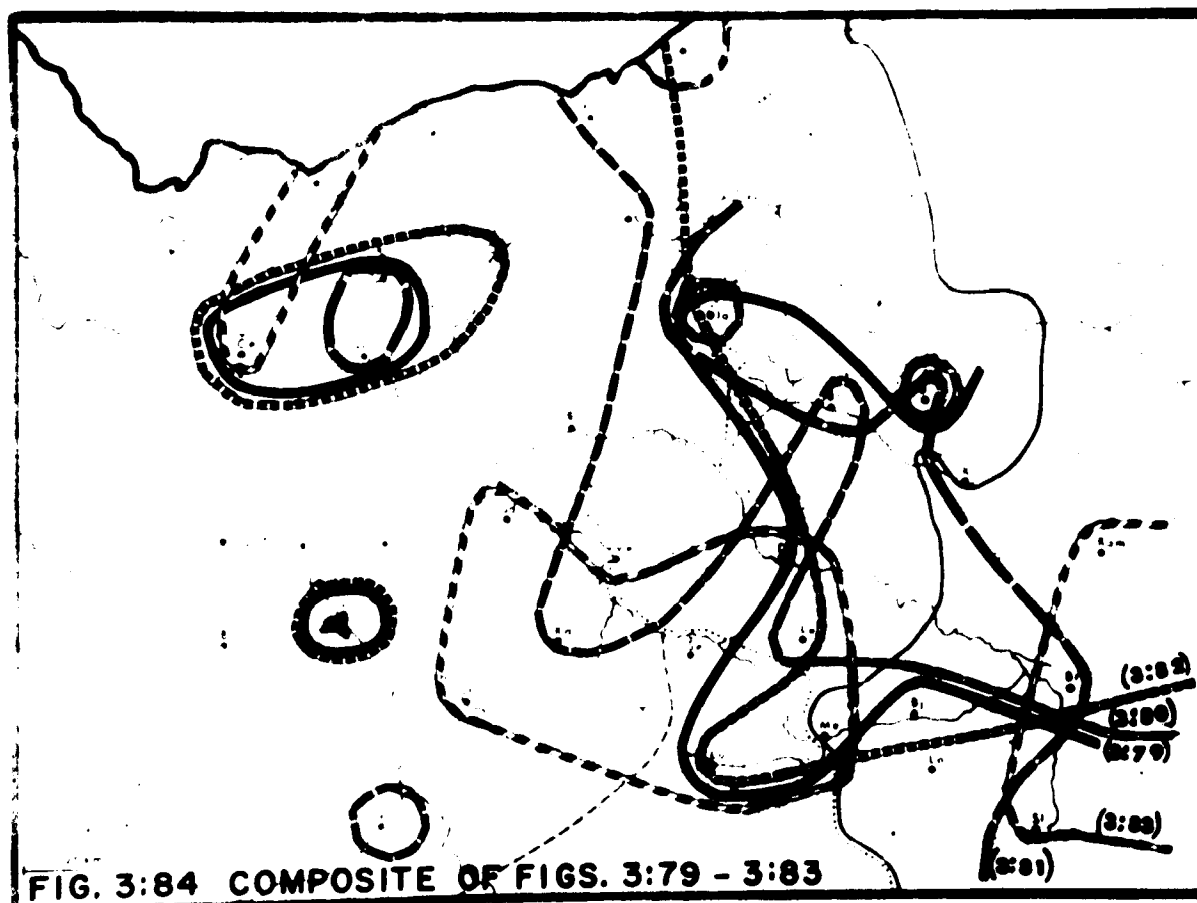
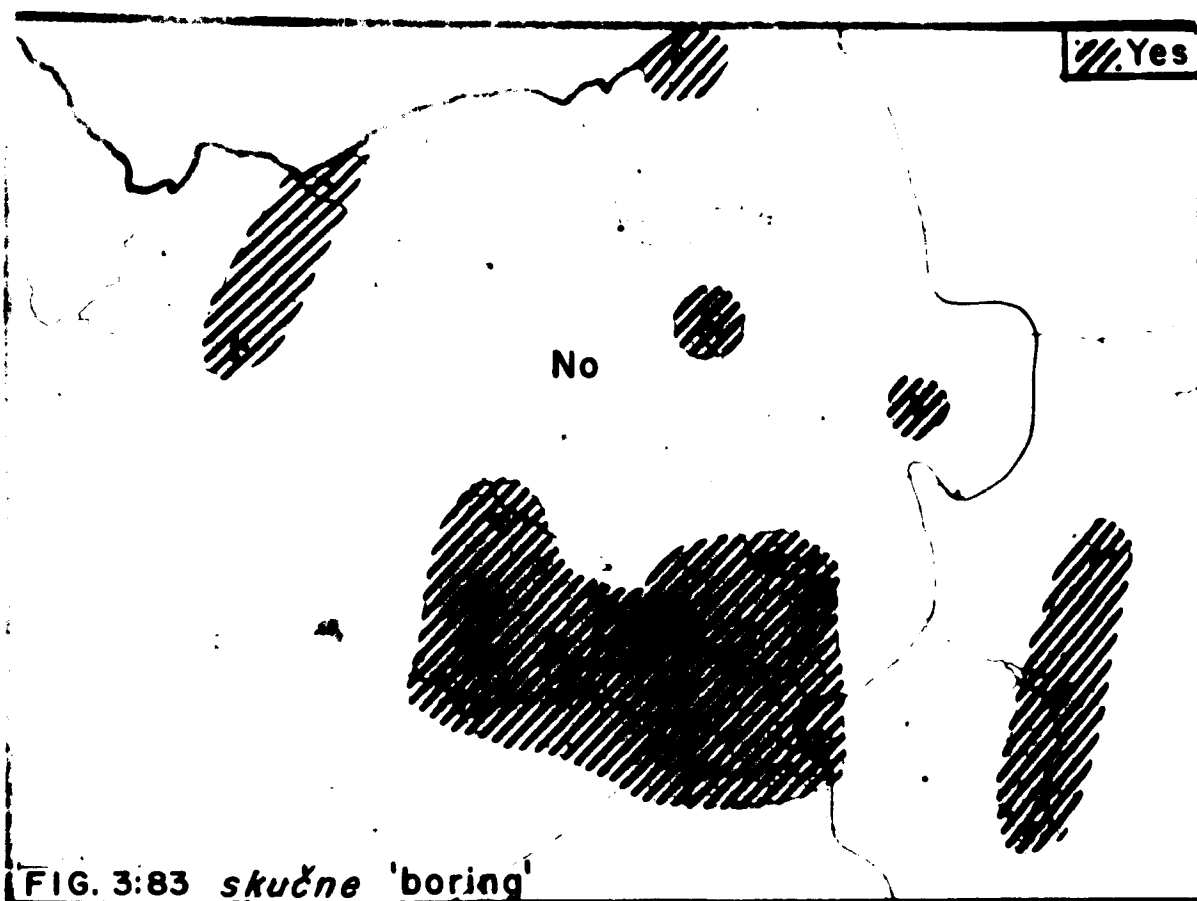


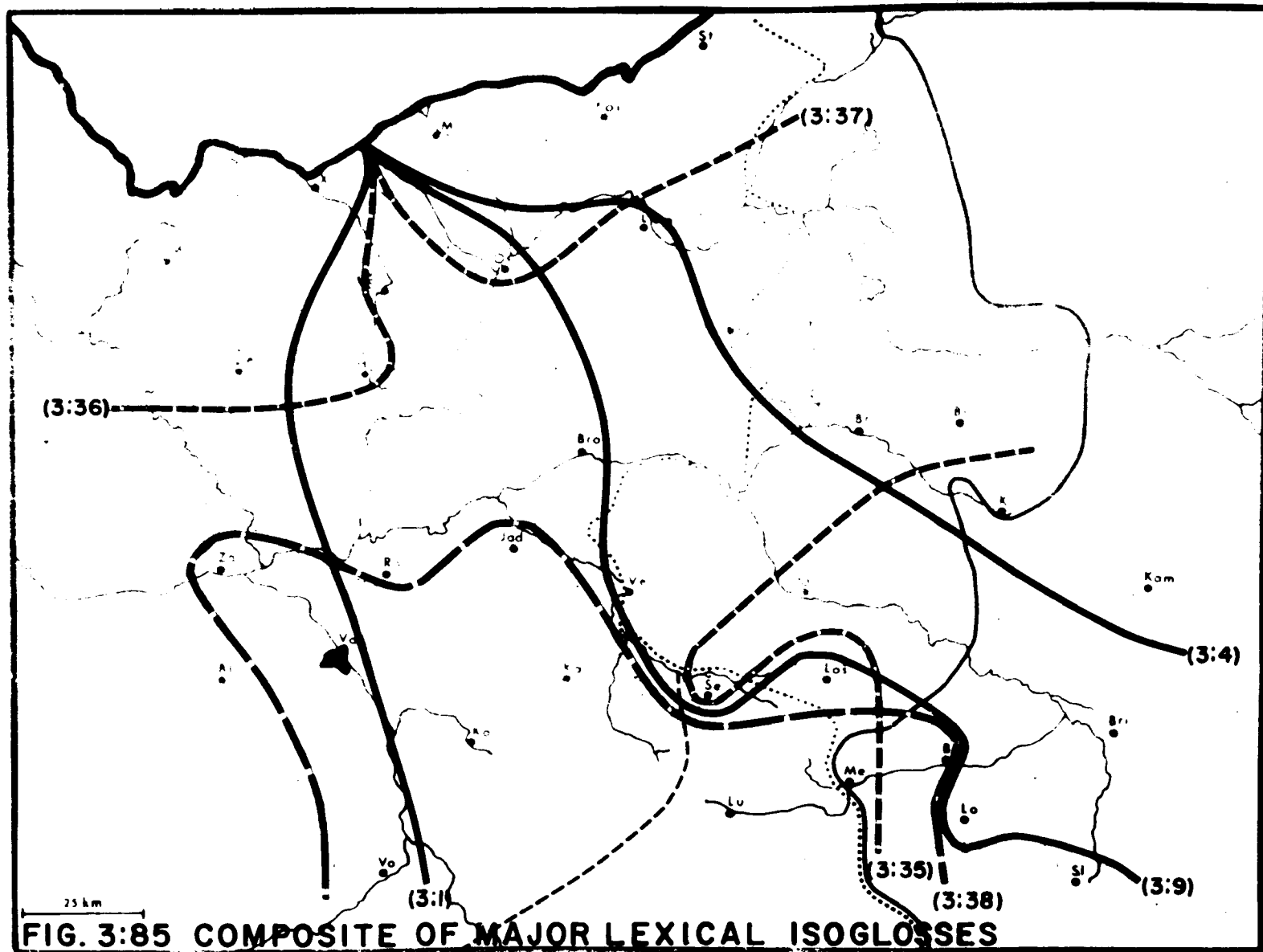
FIG. 3:82 *kartin(k)e* 'picture'



century, when Eastern Poland fell under Russian sovereignty. Whatever the degree of eastern domination of Polish society in general, however, it is apparent, from both verbal and non-verbal data cited thus far, that the predominant forces in Jewish society were not of Russian origin.

### 3.4 General Configuration of Yiddish Lexical Distributions

FIG. 3:85 COMPOSITE of Major Lexical Isoglosses. The picture that emerges from superimposing lexical Isoglosses 1, 2, and 3, and others typical of regional lexical specialization, is strikingly similar to the map of "towns recalled" (Fig. 2:34). In view of our assumptions concerning the probable relationship of linguistic to non-verbal regionalization within a society (§2:0) we are hardly surprised to discover that the discontinuities in both are as much alike as Figs. 3:85 and 2:34 prove them to be.



## CHAPTER 4

### GRAMMAR

#### 4.0 Introduction

Our grammatical data lend themselves more readily to structural treatment than either the lexical or the ethnographic materials of the preceding chapters. We have chosen two important aspects of grammatical variation in Yiddish for detailed presentation--grammatical gender (§4.1) and case systems (§4.2)--and several other phenomena for briefer description (§§4.3-4.5). In each case, the data permit us to define a relatively consistent relationship between systemic variation and regional distribution. An instance in which this relationship is not in evidence is also described (§4.6).

#### 4.1 Grammatical Gender

Although Yiddish grammars customarily attempt to classify nouns belonging to different genders in terms of different types of derivational affixes, it must be admitted that all selection of gender in Yiddish, as in German, is morphemic. Yiddish nouns have, as a rule, no overt gender markers. While, in the absence of such markers, it has often been assumed that the definite article accompanying the noun defines its gender, U. Weinreich has shown (1961) that the problem does not lend itself to so simple a solution.

Historically, Yiddish is a three-gender language. In this

respect it is like both German and the Slavic languages, but unlike Hebrew-Aramaic which distinguishes only masculine and feminine. The gender distinctions in Standard Yiddish and in most of the dialects can be illustrated by the forms der tiš (m.) 'the table', di hant (f.) 'the hand', dos ferd (n.) 'the horse'.

The gender of Yiddish nouns does not always correspond to their gender in the source language. Many HA masculine and feminine nouns, for example, have been assigned to the Yiddish neuter. Reyzen (1924b:319) suggests that these nouns, on entering Yiddish, acquired the genders of their antecedents of Germanic origin. In any case, the shift to neuter among nouns of HA origin contrasts with the gender treatment of the more recently added nouns of Slavic origin, and thus testifies to the relative age of the HA component in Yiddish: "Slavic neuters are almost invariably reclassified, the...Yiddish neuter [in more recent periods] being practically impermeable to loan words" (U. Weinreich 1958a:392).

The major impetus to regional variation in Yiddish gender appears to reside in a fundamental change in the structure of the gender system in NEY (Lithuania-Belorussia). Among the special developments in Lithuanian Yiddish noted by Sapir (1915:255) was "the transfer of most neuter nouns to the feminine gender". It would be more precise to say that the entire neuter category has disappeared, leaving NEY as an ostensibly two-gender dialect in which the distinctions cited previously are realized as der tiš, di hant, der ferd.

However, the nouns that belong to what appears to be a single di gender do not constitute a grammatically homogeneous group. In order

to differentiate them, we must examine more carefully the behavior of their modifiers. As a basis of reference, we may consider the inflections of the definite article in varieties of Eastern Yiddish in which three genders are distinguished; Standard Yiddish will serve our purpose (Table 2).

TABLE 2  
DEFINITE ARTICLE INFLECTIONS IN STANDARD YIDDISH

Singular				Plural
Case	Masculine	Neuter	Feminine	di
<u>Nominative</u>	der	dos	di	
<u>Accusative</u>	dem			
Dative		dem	der	
After Prepositions	dem ~ -n/-m			

Note that only the masculine and neuter articles may fuse with a preceding preposition. We will also need to refer to the fact that possessive pronouns in Yiddish are inflected only for number, never for gender. Thus majn tiš/lip/ferd 'my (sg.) . . .', majne tišn/lipn/ferd 'my (pl.) . . .'.<sup>1</sup>

Against this background we can now delimit the various categories of nouns that are accompanied by di in NEY. One such group consists of nouns that Reyzen considered "a kind of plural" (1924:19). Indeed, in the northeast, nouns of this group share three formal features with the plural: (i) when preceded by a preposition the article di does not change;



(ii) a preceding possessive adjective takes the -e suffix;<sup>1</sup> (iii) the nouns may not be accompanied by the indefinite article; e.g. di gelt 'the money', fun di gelt 'of the money', majne gelt 'my money'; gelt 'money', but not \*a gelt.

Despite these features reminiscent of the plural, the nouns of this group belong to a sub-category of the singular, because the verb that agrees with them is in the singular form. Thus, majne gelt ligt in bank 'my money is (lies) in the bank', as against majne epl lign afn tiš 'my apples are (lying) on the table'. We will refer to the members of this class as nouns of the Mass Gender.<sup>2</sup>

A second group of di nouns is distinguished in NEY by the fact that when its members are preceded by a preposition and a definite article, without an adjective intervening, the preposition and the article may fuse; e.g. di bet 'the bed', af der bet = afn bet 'on the bed'. In CY, as in Standard Yiddish, such fusions occur only with masculine and neuter nouns (see Table 2). The words of this group in NEY will be labeled nouns of the Intermediate Gender.<sup>3</sup>

There remain, of course, NEY nouns of the "true" Feminine

<sup>1</sup>In our investigation we neglected to test this phenomenon adequately, but it does not, in any case, appear to be prevalent in our territory. Only a single occurrence of azelxe brojt 'such (pl.) bread' (cf. Fig. 4:3) was recorded in Lomze. Appropriate questions have subsequently been added to the Questionnaire of the LCAAJ.

<sup>2</sup>This term, but not the subclassification of the nouns to which it applies (cf. §4.11.11), was proposed by U. Weinreich (1961).

<sup>3</sup>For this term, also, cf. U. Weinreich (1961). The use of the term "gender" in this, as in the previous case, should not obscure the fact that the new categories to which it applies, quasi-genders at best, might more reasonably be considered types of noun classes.

Gender whose articles follow the paradigm of the feminine in Table 2.

We will now attempt to explore the relationship between the emergence of the Mass and Intermediate Genders, the loss of the neuter in NEY, and other gender changes both in NEY and in the dialects adjoining it.

#### 4.11 Loss of the Neuter

4.11.1 Transfer of Neuters to the di Genders. We can see now that, what to Sapir appeared to be a transfer of neuter nouns to the feminine, was, in fact, a transfer to one or another of the three di genders. In the following paragraphs we examine the distribution of some typical examples of each change.

4.11.11 Neuter > Mass Gender. In the northeast, the nouns illustrated in Fig. 4:1, gelt 'money', blut 'blood', and flejš 'meat', share the features typical of the Mass Gender (cf. above §4.1). Somewhat different, however, are the substantives exemplified in Fig. 4:2. These may be used not only as mass nouns but as count nouns as well: e.g. a vaser 'a body of water', a štroj 'a straw', a gloz 'a glass'. The definite article in such cases is der rather than di; and the count nouns yield regular plurals: väsern, štrojen, glezer.

Fig. 4:3 illustrates two further distinctions: brojt 'bread', when used as a count noun, has a plural only in the diminutive brejtlek. Di lixt has homonymous forms for the count singular ('the candle'), the count plural ('the candles'), and the mass form ('the light').

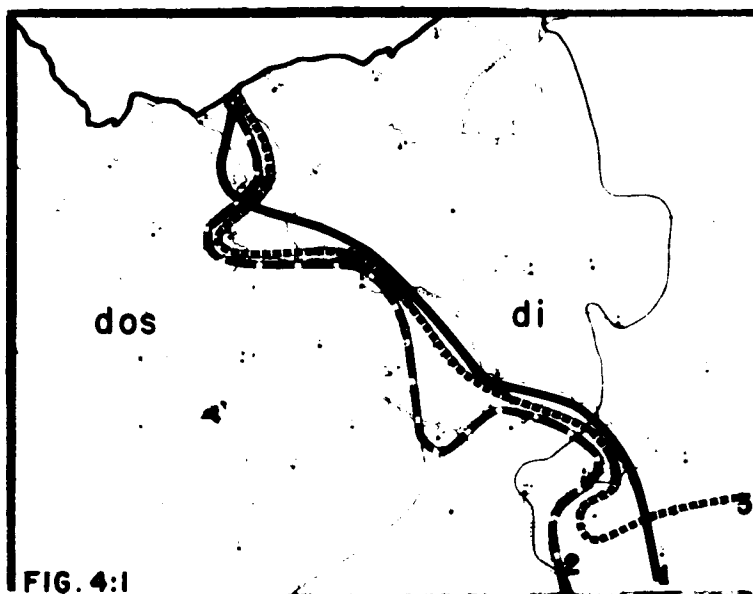


FIG. 4:1

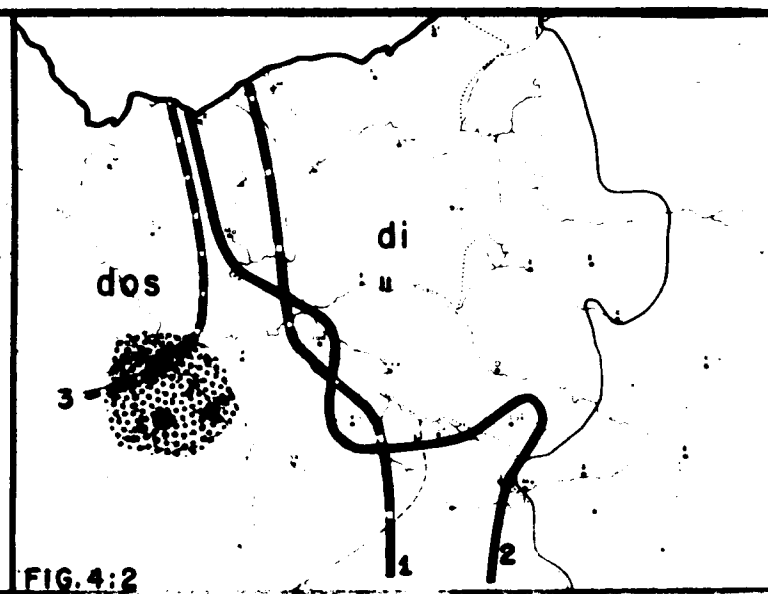


FIG. 4:2

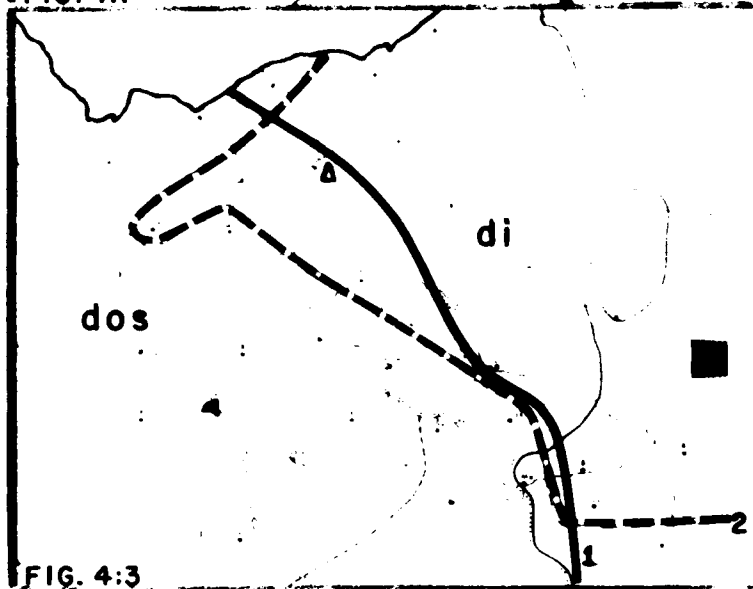


FIG. 4:3

# NEUTER > MASS GENDER

FIG. 4:1

- 1. *gelt* 'money'
- 2. *blut* 'blood'
- 3. *flejš* 'meat'

FIG. 4:2

- 1. *glaz* 'glass'
- di
- 2. *štroj* 'straw'
- di
- 3. *vaser* 'water'
- " dos

FIG. 4:3

- 1. *brojt* 'bread'
- △ der
- dos~der
- 2. *lixt* 'candle'

4.11.12 Neuter > Intermediate Gender. Figs. 4:4-4:6 depict a number of the NEY di nouns whose definite articles regularly fuse with a preceding preposition. In the example of Fig. 4:6, the distinction between the historical neuter of hojz 'house' in the southwest and its new gender in the northeast is illustrated not by the definite article but rather by the forms of the adjective intervening between the indefinite article a and the noun, i.e. hojx 'tall (n.)' and hojxe 'tall (inter., fem.)'. That hojz 'house' is an intermediate and not a feminine in NEY would be more apparent if it were preceded by a preposition and a definite article instead (cf. §4.22.23).

4.11.13 Neuter > Feminine Gender. Instances in which former neuters become regular feminine nouns are rare and probably confined to words that designate females. Thus vajb 'wife' and mejdl 'girl' are neuter in the west and feminine in the east. Neither of these is illustrated. In their normal oblique forms they would be preceded by the dative article der.

4.11.14 Diffusion of the New Gender System as a System. Fig. 4:7 is a composite of the preceding maps. The gender innovations which it depicts originated in the northeast and most of their boundaries lie between the two major phonological isoglosses. In the case of several words, however, notably gloz, štroj, and vaser (originally illustrated in Fig. 4:2), the isoglosses lie considerably to the west of the phonological boundaries. This geographic grouping suggests that such words (i.e. mass nouns convertible to masculine count nouns) do, in fact, constitute a distinctive grammatical category.

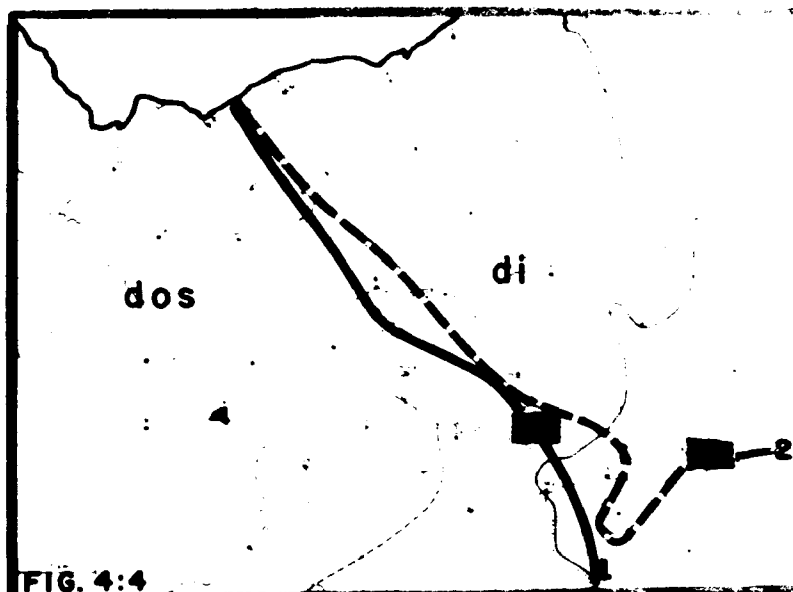
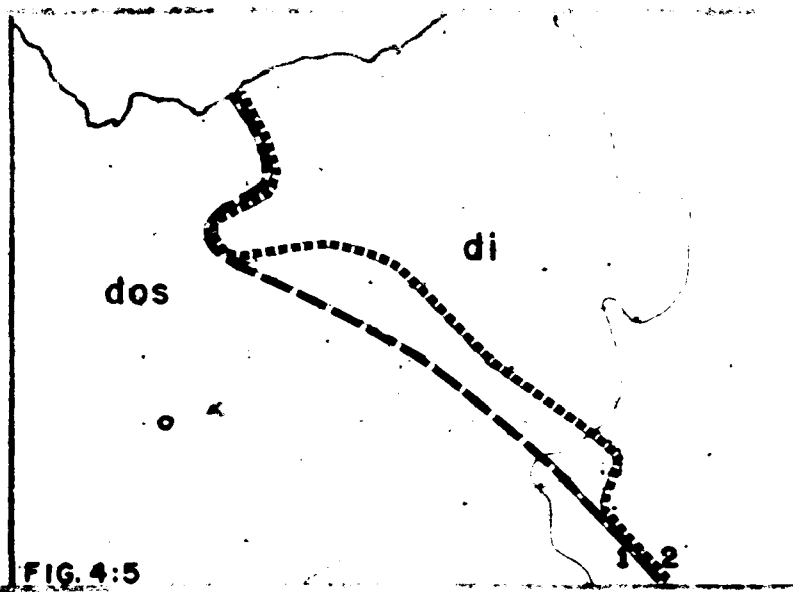
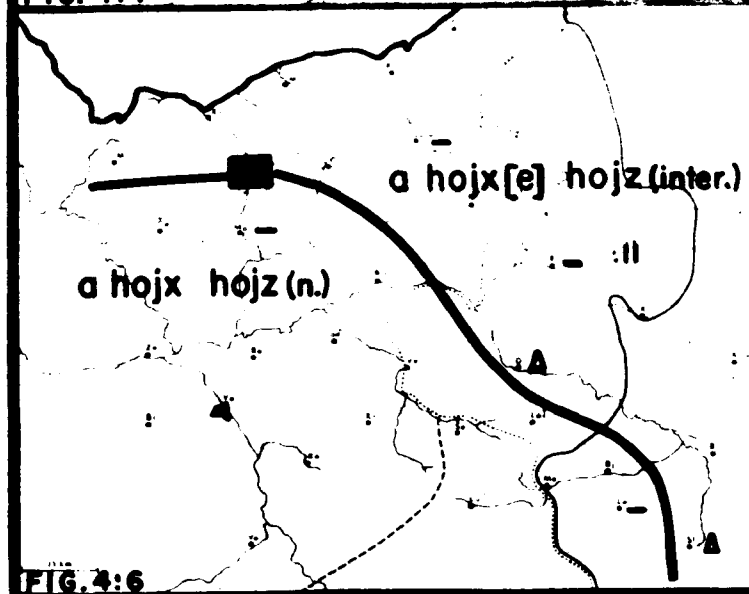


FIG. 4:4



**FIG. 4:5**



**FIG. 4:6**

## NEUTER > INTERMEDIATE GENDER

**FIG. 4:4**

**l. *moj* 'mouth'**

**2. hemd 'shirt'**

**dos~di (1,2)**

**FIG. 4:5**

**L. *bet* 'bed'**

## 2. *ej* 'egg'

- $d_i(1,2)$

**FIG. 4:6**

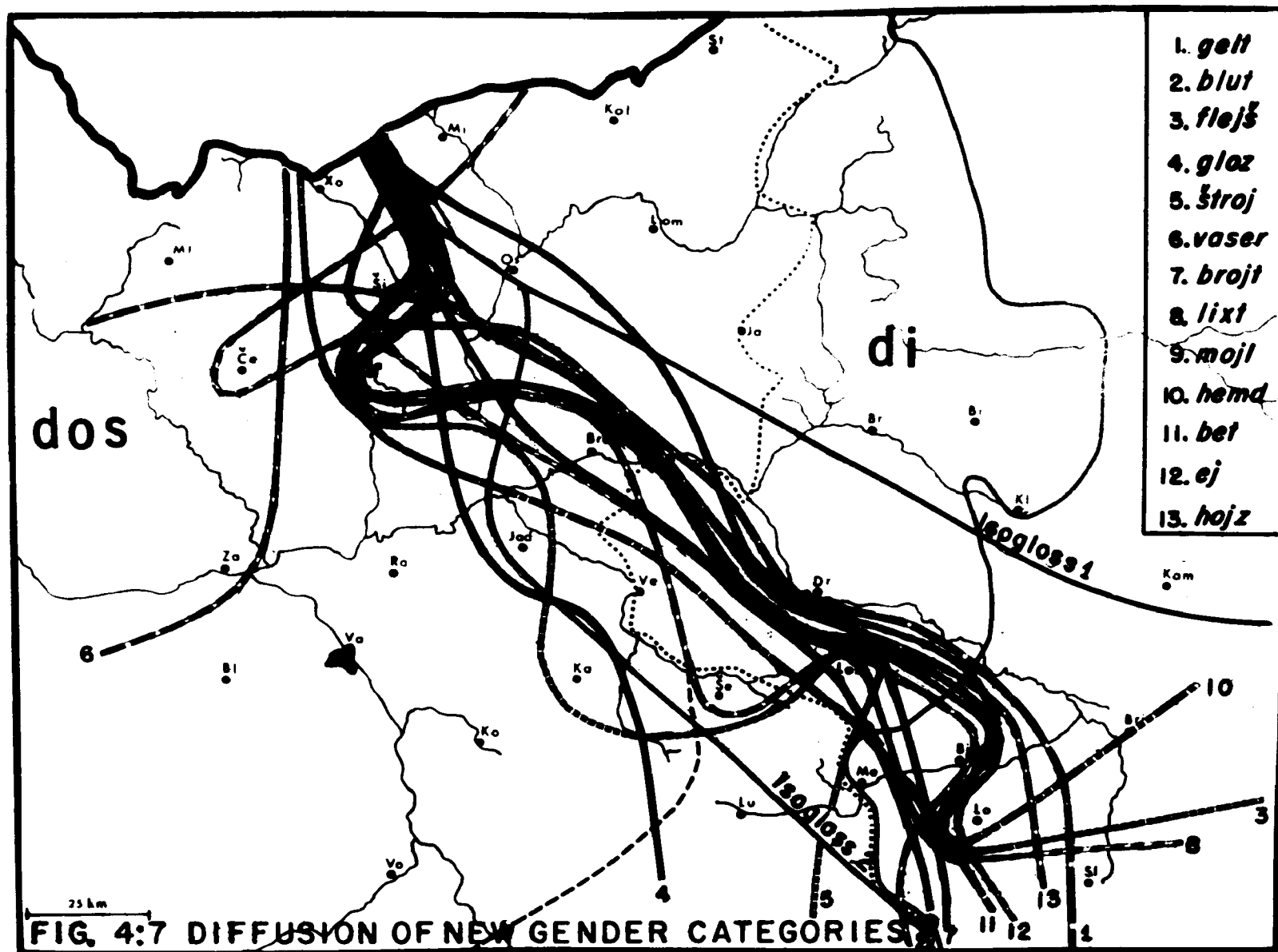
### 1. 'a tall house'

■  $n \sim \text{inter.}$

11 n.

**Δ masc.**

**- other form**



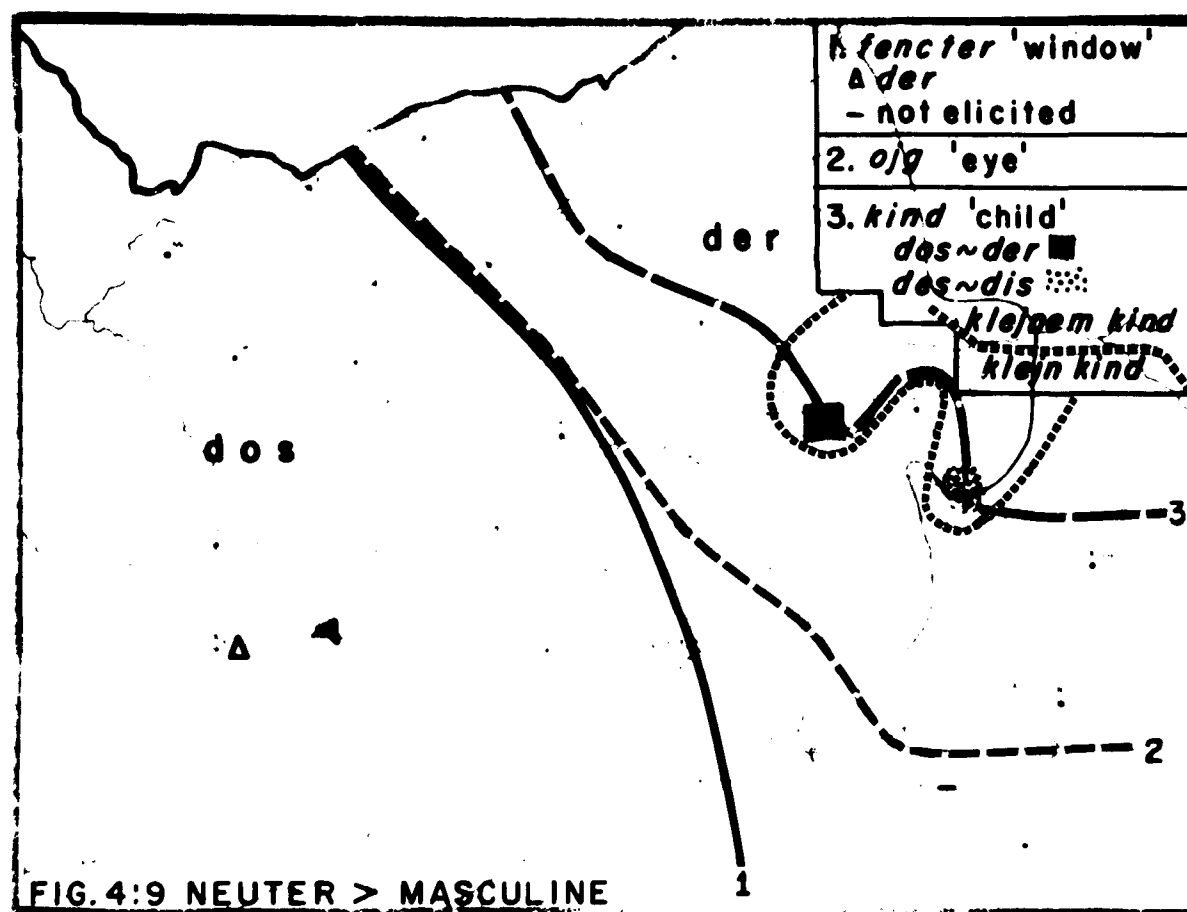
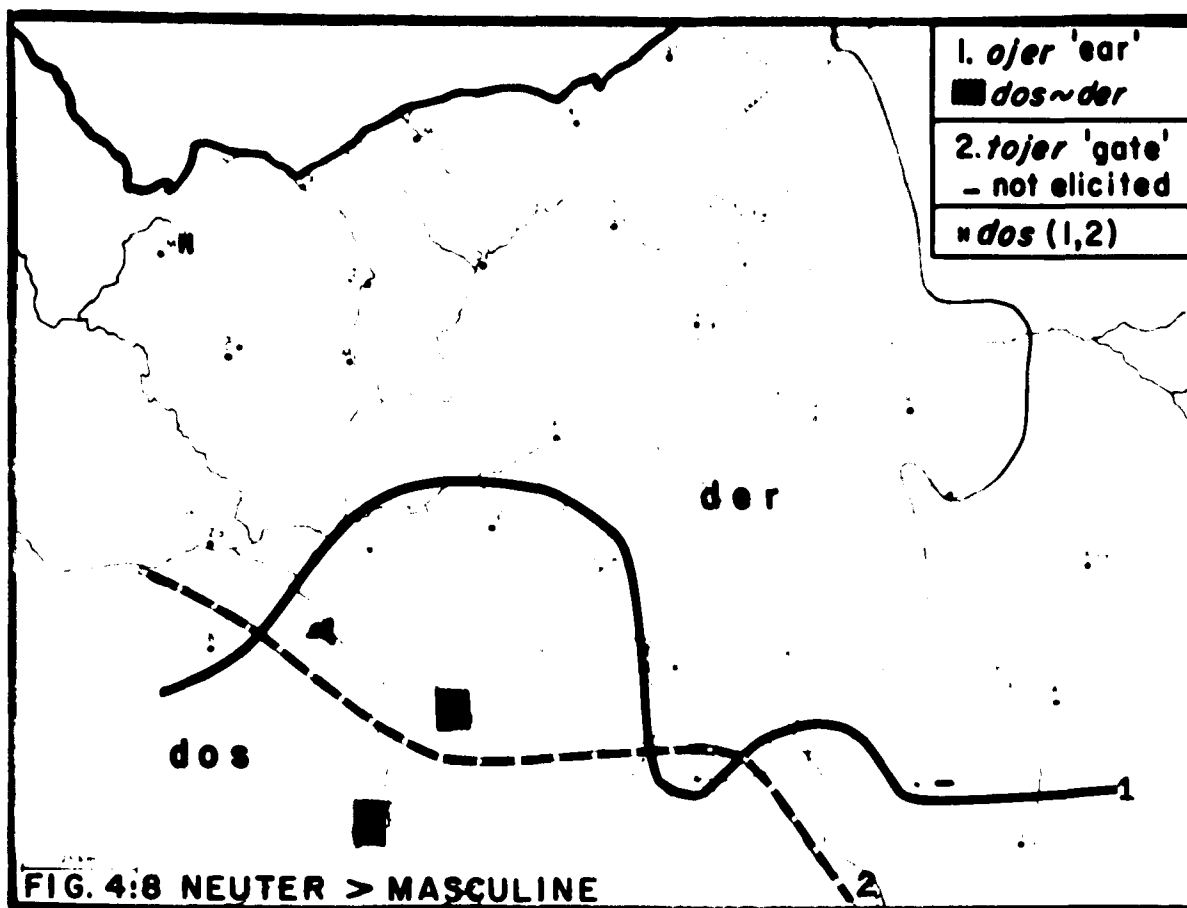
In any case, the location of these westernmost isoglosses is presumptive evidence that the process of gender innovation has been moving continually westward, and we can reasonably assume that the contact between two- and three- gender systems which gave rise to the heterogeneous transition area of Fig. 4:7, originally took place to the east of its present location. It remains for future investigations to reveal the extent to which the process of innovation may already have penetrated the area to the west of our map.

4.11.2 Neuter > Masculine Gender. We have already observed sporadic changes of original neuters to the masculine (Figs. 4:3, 4:6). The process is more explicit, however, in the examples of Figs. 4:8-4:9. Changes to the masculine are, on the whole, less frequent than changes to the mass and intermediate genders, and it may be observed that frequently the transition to the masculine applies to words with the canonical form of many original masculine nouns. The final -er of fencer 'window', ojer 'ear', tojer 'gate', which is easily identified with the masculine agentive suffix -er (e.g. lerer 'teacher', šrajber 'writer') may account for the fact that these words enjoy such widespread distribution in their new masculine forms.

The isogloss between the neuter and the masculine forms of kind 'child' represents the furthest eastward stronghold of the neuter gender. When kind is preceded by an indefinite article and an adjective, the occurrence of the masculine is even more restricted; e.g. ix hob a klejn kind (n.) as against a klejnem kind (m.) 'I have a small child' (cf. also Fig. 4.51).<sup>3a</sup>

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<sup>3a</sup> There is no evidence that the -n stem of the adjective klejn 'small' is a factor in determining this variation.



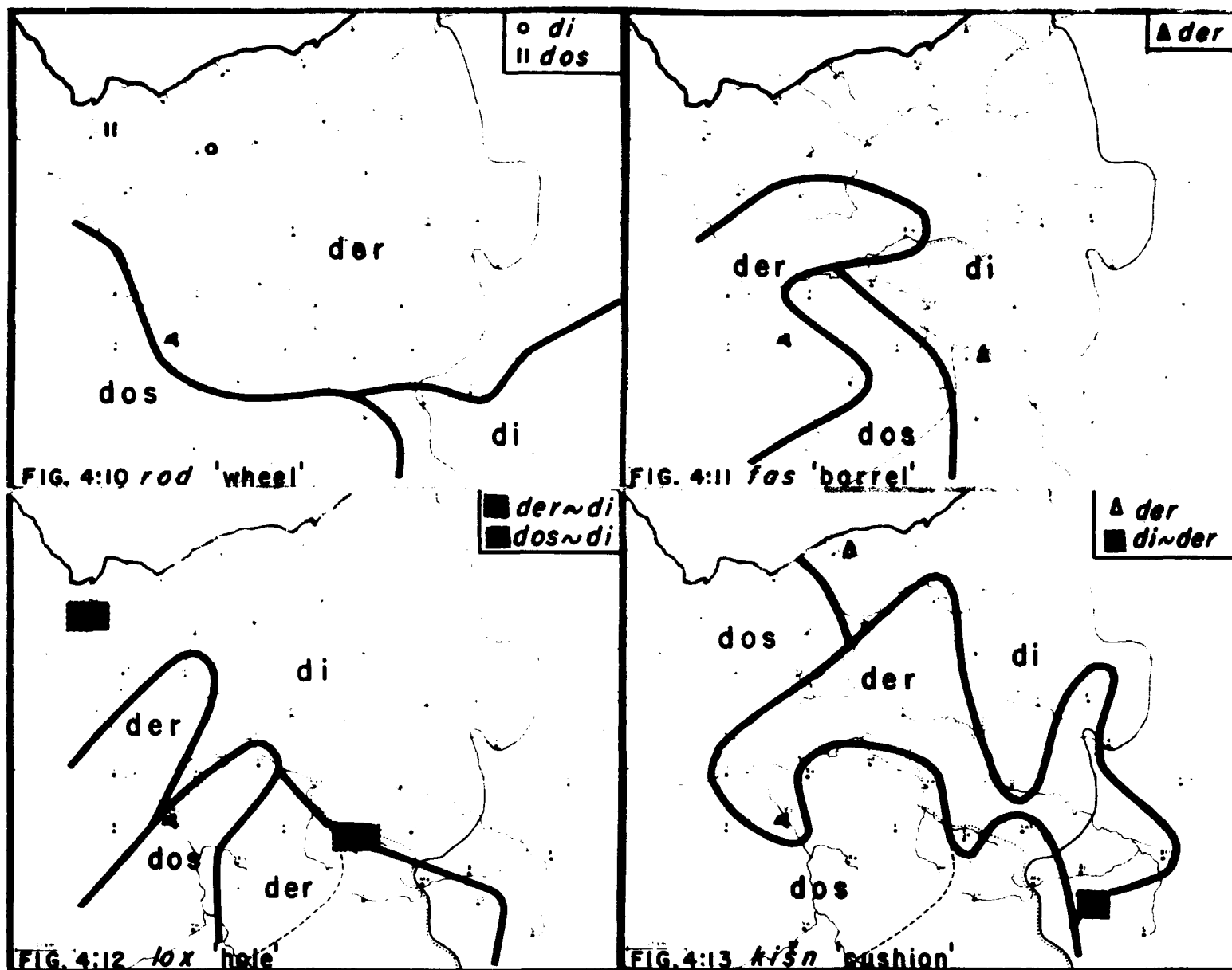


4.11.3 Neuter > Masculine and Intermediate. While the preceding maps depict neuter forms with new masculine alternants only, Figs. 4:10-4:13 illustrate the occurrence of original neuters appearing in both masculine and intermediate variants. This variety of gender alternants challenges us to establish the relative chronology of their development.

In the reassignment of historically neuter forms to other genders in NEY, it is likely that words which displayed an explicit resemblance to the canonical form of masculine nouns were assigned, largely, to the masculine. Other words would then have been distributed among the several new di categories; those that met the semantic requirement--substance names and abstract qualities--to the mass gender; others to the intermediate gender. Many original feminines were also incorporated into the intermediate gender, but there appear to be no instances of "true" feminine innovations restricted to NEY. (Universal in EY, however, is di bord 'the beard' cf. MHG der bart; cf. also §4.13.1).

We assume that the loss of the neuter and the emergence of the intermediate gender were, if not causally related, at least temporally associated phenomena, and further, that in the words illustrated in Figs. 4:10-4:13, with alternants in the neuter, in the masculine, and in the intermediate, the first change was from the neuter to the intermediate. Masculine forms then emerged, not from the neuter, but rather from the contracted forms of the intermediate article in the prepositional (i.e. dative) case.

It is not unlikely that contact between the firmly established

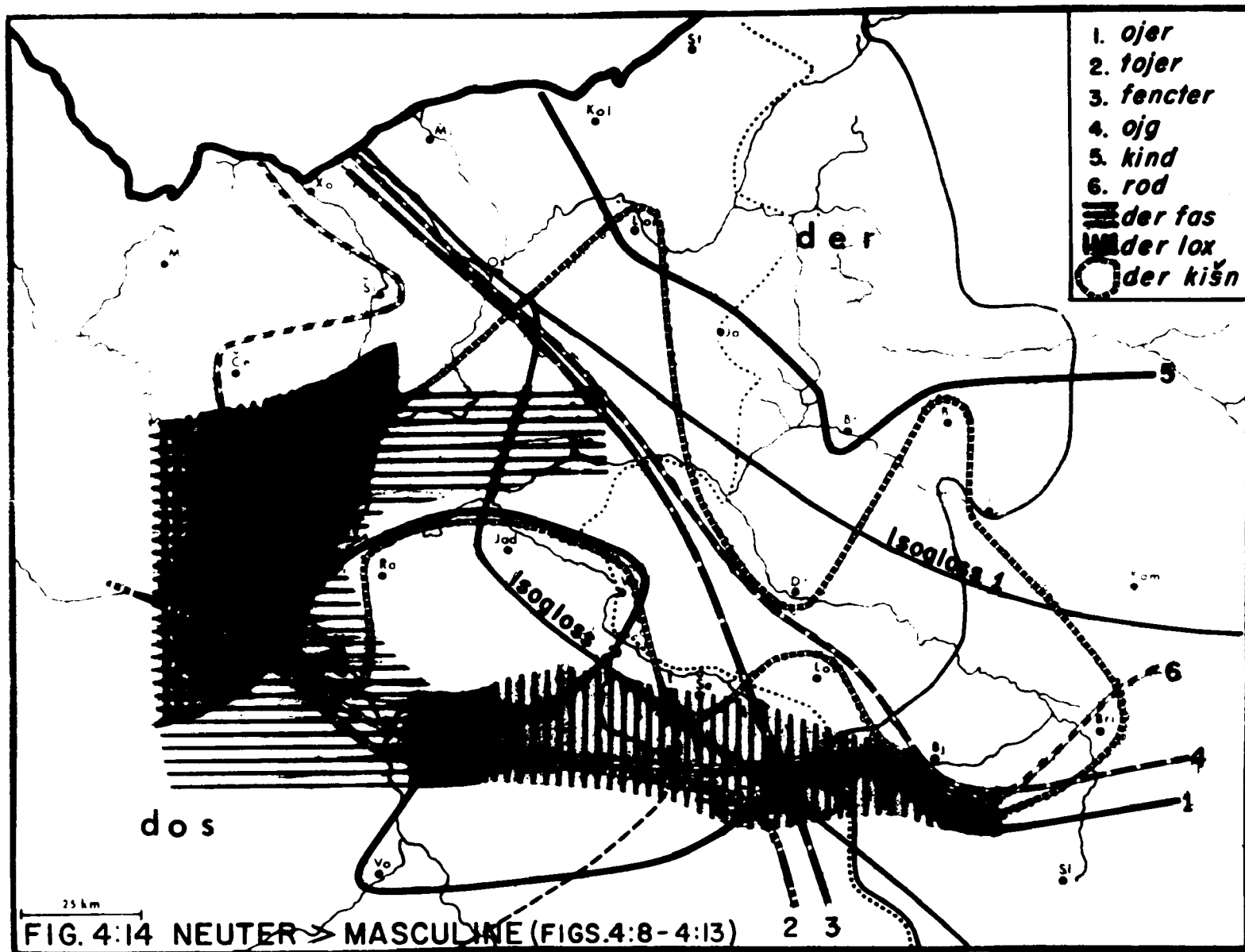


three gender system and the new intermediate category (formally marked by the contraction of di forms in the manner of masculine and neuter nouns) led to the reinterpretation of the latter as masculines--this particularly since their lack of an explicit resemblance to feminine forms (e.g. final -e) allies them more closely with the canonical form of the masculine. That they did not simply revert is but another consequence of the "impermeability" of the neuter.

The picture yielded by Fig. 4:14, in which new masculines (< neuters) are summarized, is easily distinguished from that of Fig. 4:7. Whereas, in the latter the isoglosses denoting the shift of neuters to new di forms tend to coincide with one another and to run along already familiar lines, the new masculines (Fig. 4:14) are, instead, of relatively heterogeneous distribution and fail to subdivide the area in the customary manner.

This disparity between the two groups may be attributed to differences in the features criterial to their definition. The new masculines are not definable semantically. Furthermore, an attempt at a formal definition would be based largely on negative criteria. The only factors relevant to their distribution may be the relative age of the individual innovations and the efficacy of the communication channels which facilitated their spread.

The new di forms have, in contrast, either semantic or structural correlates. (Those of the mass gender have both: mass substances, in large measure, treated as plurals.) Their spread would therefore appear to be linked to the diffusion of these related



categories and thus to be much more homogeneous. We find, in fact, that there is a close relationship between the diffusion of new di forms and the change in the case system which marks the intermediate gender. (Cf. below Figs. 4:43-4:46, esp. 4:45.)

It is possible to argue the case for a different sequence of events. Neuters could have changed first to the masculine and only then have been submerged by the intermediate gender moving westward. The discontinuity of the masculine area in Fig. 4:12 might be offered as evidence if an intermediate rather than a neuter area intervened. Moreover, the distribution of the masculine alternant in Fig. 4:10 does not lend weight to the argument, since the advance of the intermediate would then have had to emanate from the southeast--an unlikely assumption. In general, this view would compel us to assume that the loss of the neuter preceded the development of the intermediate gender, possibly by a significant time period. The weight of evidence favors a development which assumes, at the very least, their chronological association and probably the priority of the intermediate gender (cf. fn. 4 and §4.22.21). The assumed order of events could therefore be stated as follows: i) new intermediate gender in NEY; ii) loss of neuter in NEY; iii) new masculines < intermediates in contact areas; iv) other gender changes.

4.11.4 The Loss and Retention of Neuters. The minimum and maximum ranges of neuter disturbance are illustrated in Fig. 4:15. As we have indicated (§4.11.14), the highest degree of fluctuation occurs in the area between Isoglosses 1 and 2. Another interesting feature that can be abstracted from the data is illustrated in Fig. 4:16. Neuter

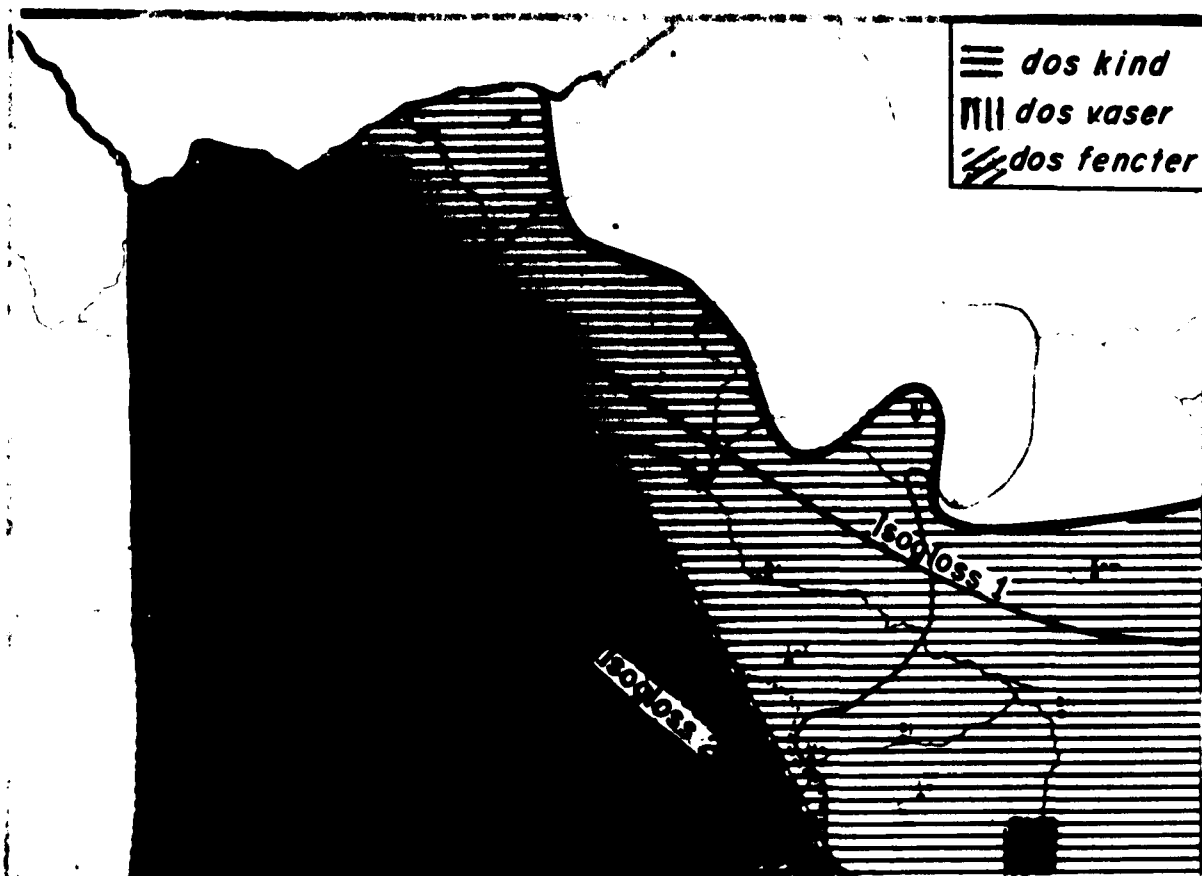


FIG. 4:15 MINIMUM & MAXIMUM RANGES OF NEUTERDISTURBANCE

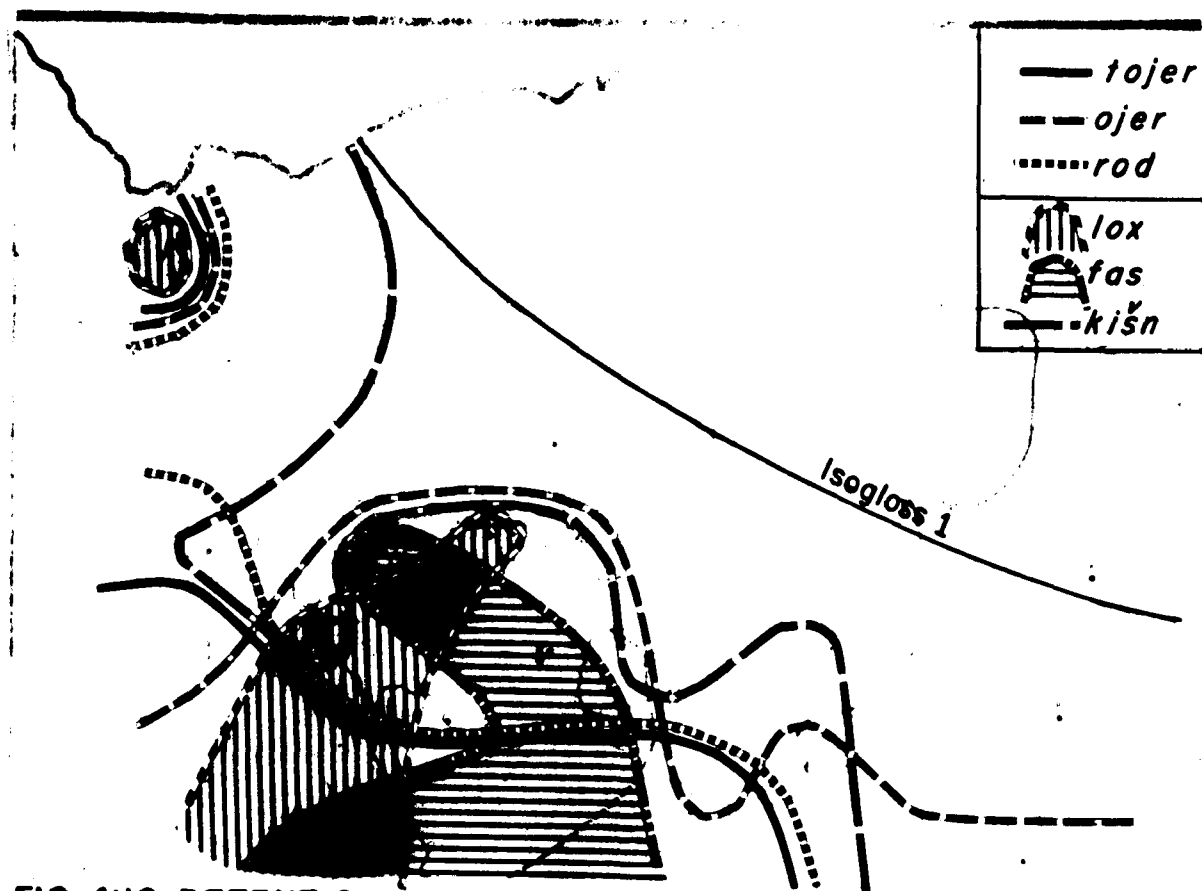


FIG. 4:16 RETENTION OF NEUTERS

forms with masculine variants have retained their historical gender largely in the south.

We have encountered a previous illustration much like this one. Whereas the former (Fig. 3:38) depicted the diffusion of lexical innovations from the south, the latter suggests southern resistance to the penetration of innovations from the north. These are not, as it might appear, opposing phenomena. Quite the contrary: the pressures which carried lexical items northward are apparently such as to prevent the diffusion of gender change (at least where it is structurally free) in the opposite direction.

#### 4.12 Other Gender Changes

While the regional variation presented thus far may ultimately be attributable to a structural change in the northeastern gender system,<sup>4</sup> it is not clear how this factor was responsible for the changes that are described below.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Shapiro (1939) suggests that the two-gender character of NEY reflects the structure of Lithuanian as the pre-Yiddish language of the Jews in that area. The historical and linguistic plausibility of this hypothesis need not concern us here (cf. Y. Mark 1941). Y. Mark (1944:87) proposes, more reasonably, what Sapir had already implied (1915:225), viz. that the Yiddish development can be attributed to the influence on NEY of Lithuanian (and, as Mark adds, of Belorussian) where the neuter gender is also lacking, during the historical period of contact. U. Weinreich (1961) finds the argument unconvincing and proposes, instead, that the loss of the neuter in NEY is an outgrowth of the prior development of the intermediate gender--itself possibly a calque of the syncretism, in Polish, of masculine and feminine nouns in the locative, "the prepositional case par excellence".

<sup>5</sup>Without first examining the detailed history and geography of each word, we cannot accept Reyzen's assertion (1924b:12f.) that the "entire mixup in the use of gender in Yiddish" is due to the fact that in Lithuania Yiddish has lost the neuter, while elsewhere the neuter has been preserved. However, if Reyzen's hypothesis is an appeal to dialect contact as the cause of the "mixup", it is not an implausible

4.12.1 Feminine Shift to the Masculine. Figs. 4:17-4:19 illustrates originally feminine nouns that have changed to the masculine in the east. Again we may invoke the aid of canonical form to explain the reassignment of some of these nouns (Fig. 4:17): leber 'liver', lejter 'ladder', and mojer 'stone or brick house'. All of them, however, must, at least in the first instance, be considered a group apart from the masculines that have their origin in former neuters (Figs. 4:10-4:13). We described the latter as innovations of the transition area, the result of contact with the intermediate gender. The former group, on the other hand, appears to consist of northeastern innovations. Yet we find evidence that even these masculines may have originated as a result of the confusion that must have arisen when the new intermediate gender moved out of its place of origin. We know that many original feminines were transferred to the intermediate gender in NEY (i.e. in the prepositional case their "feminine" article merges with the preceding preposition). Thus, in contrast to the regional universality of the article di in the nominative and accusative, the east and the west are divided by a difference in the article in the prepositional case. We would therefore anticipate that, in the contact area, some of these (intermediates < feminines) would be reinterpreted as masculines in a fashion analogous to the reinterpretation of intermediates derived from neuters (cf. §4.11.3).

The discontinuity of the di forms in Fig. 4:20--in the west a true feminine, in the northeast an intermediate--supports the suggestion

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one: changes in gender, in the first instance structurally determined, could have led to sufficient border-area uncertainty to stimulate structurally independent changes as well.



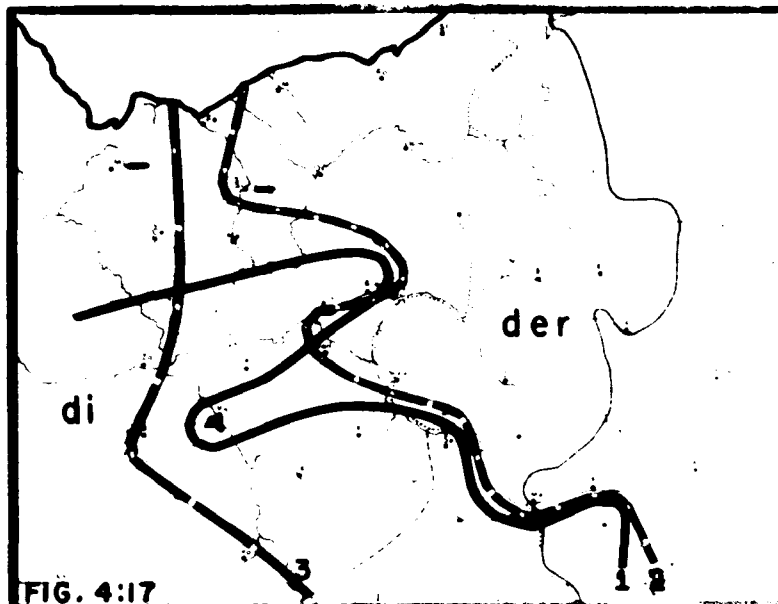


FIG. 4:17

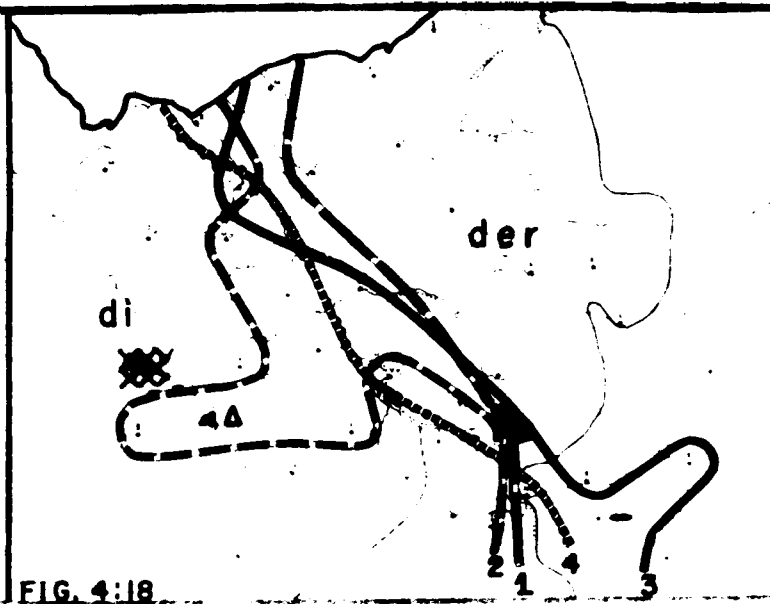


FIG. 4:18

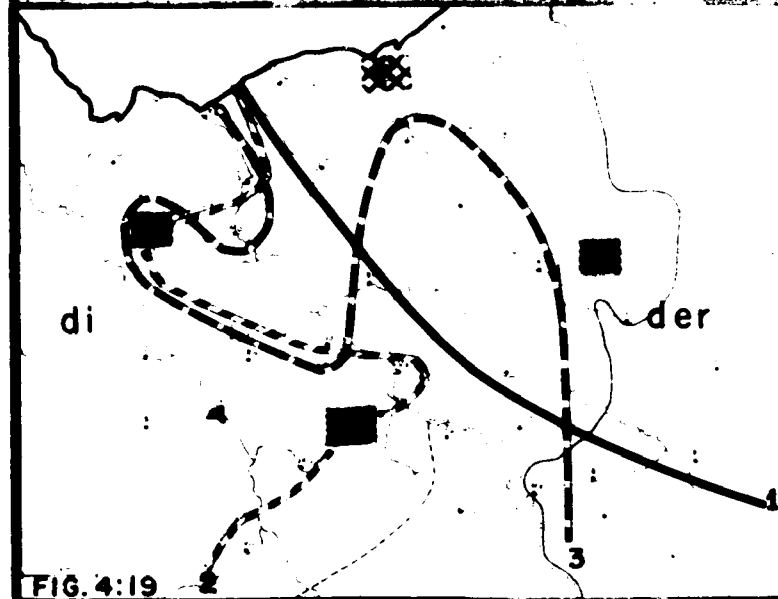


FIG. 4:19

# FEMININE > MASCULINE

FIG. 4:17

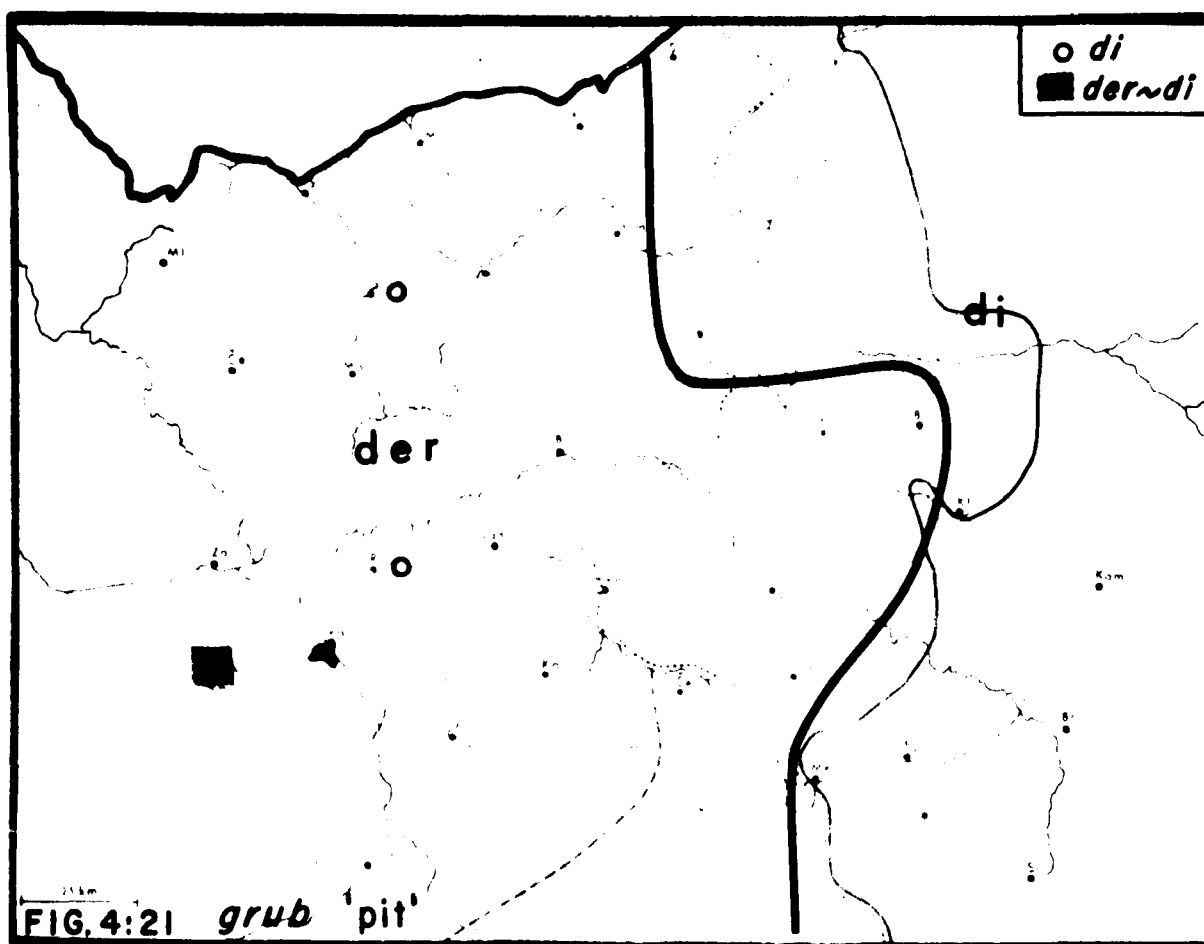
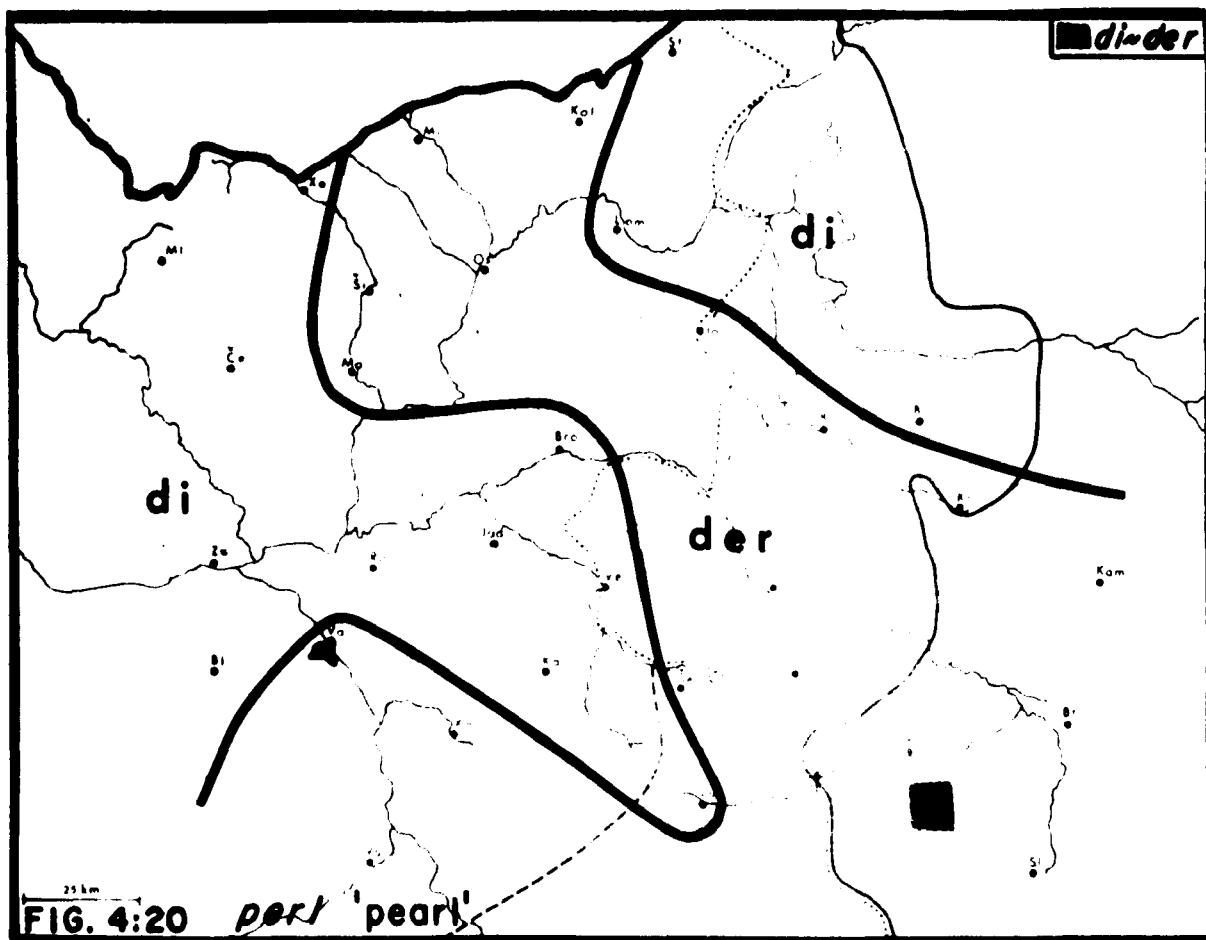
1. *mojer* 'brick house'  
- not elicited
2. *leber* 'liver'
3. *lejter* 'ladder'

FIG. 4:18

1. *cung* 'tongue'
  2. *nus* 'nut'
  3. *grenec* 'border'
  4. *šrojf* 'screw'
- not elicited
- Δ *der*
- ⊗ *dinder*

FIG. 4:19

1. *brik* 'bridge'
  2. *lomp* 'lamp'
  3. *gegn* 'neighborhood'
- ⊗ *der~di*
- *din~dos*



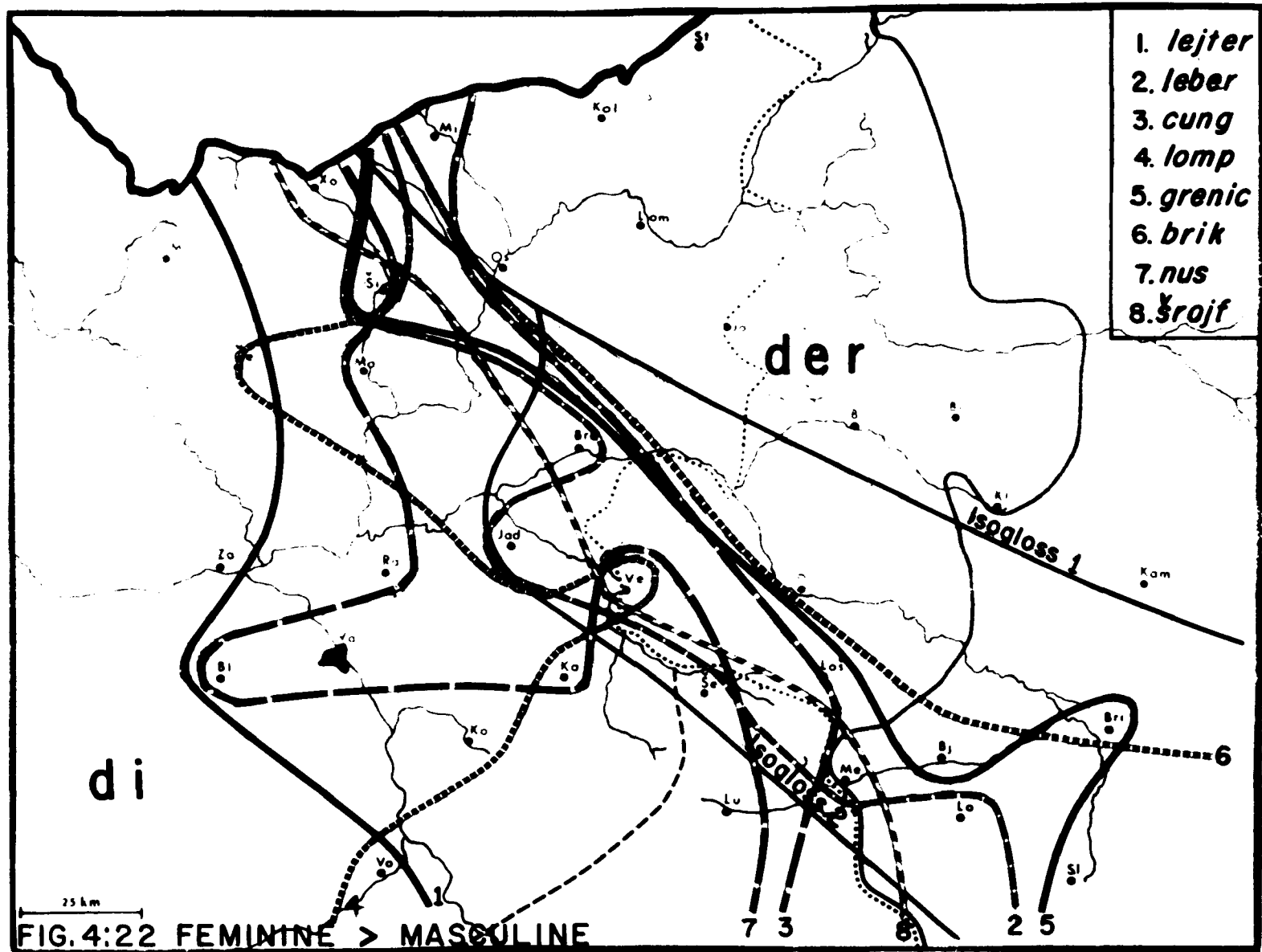
that der perl 'the pearl' is an innovation of the transition area.

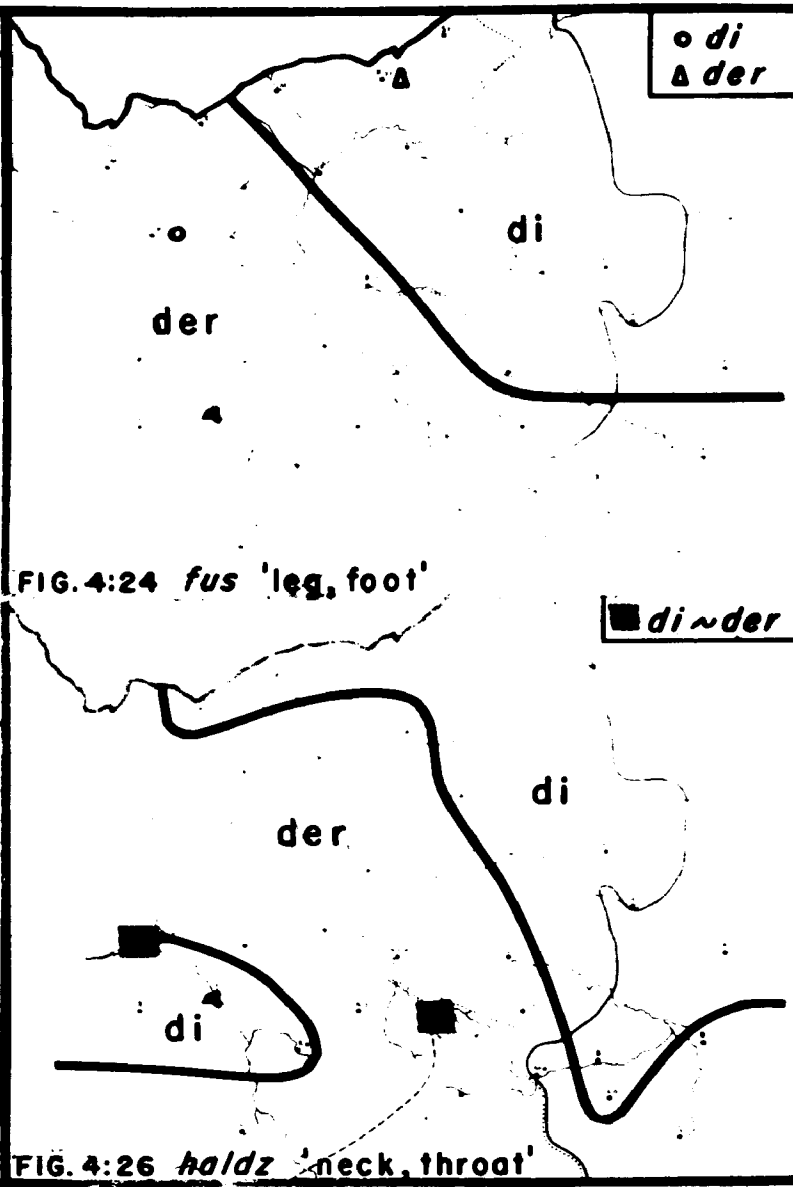
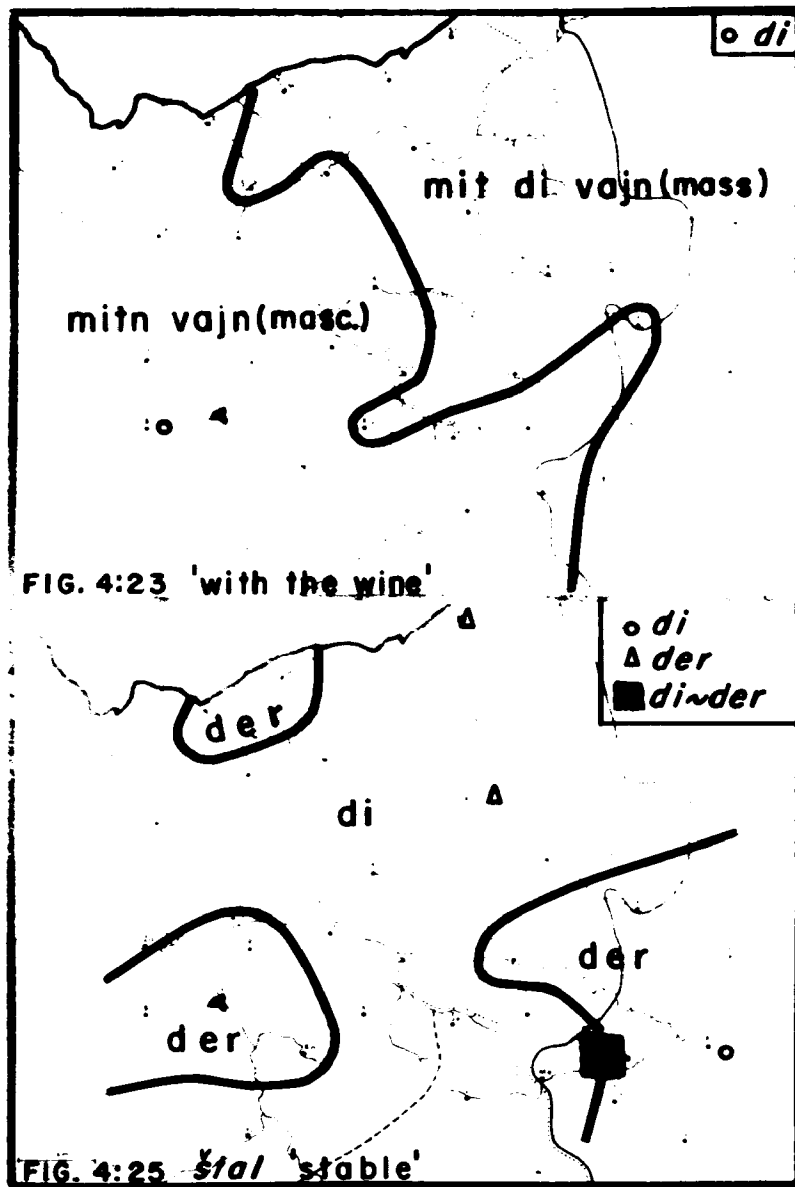
Fig. 4:21 depicts an analogous situation although the near total elimination of di grub 'the pit' from our area obscures the similarity. Only a short distance to the west, however, the feminine form reappears.

We do not know whether intermediate di forms occur anywhere to the northeast of the new masculine area in Figs. 4:17-4:19. If they do not, we would have additional evidence that, in the category of grammatical gender, the transition area was formerly located much further east of its present location and that any preexisting intermediates to the east of it were ultimately eliminated (cf. also §4.11.14). Thus we might continue to define these words as northeastern innovations in contrast to those of Figs. 4:20-4:21 which arose in the present transition area by means of the same mechanism.

We have therefore omitted the latter from the composite map in Fig. 4:22; included are only those masculine forms that are clearly innovations of NEY. Since these appear to be temporally bound to the entire northeastern development, it is not surprising to find that many of their isoglosses converge along the same lines as those of the intermediate gender in Fig. 4:7.

4.12.2 Masculine > Mass and Intermediate Genders. The masculine has given way to new di forms as well. In Fig. 4:23 vajn 'wine' represents a change to the mass gender (cf. Figs. 4:1-4:3). There remains the possibility of a masculine form der vajn in the east, but only as a count noun 'a kind of wine' with a plural form vajnen. In Fig. 4:24 fus 'leg, foot' has entered the intermediate gender along with the names of many other body parts.

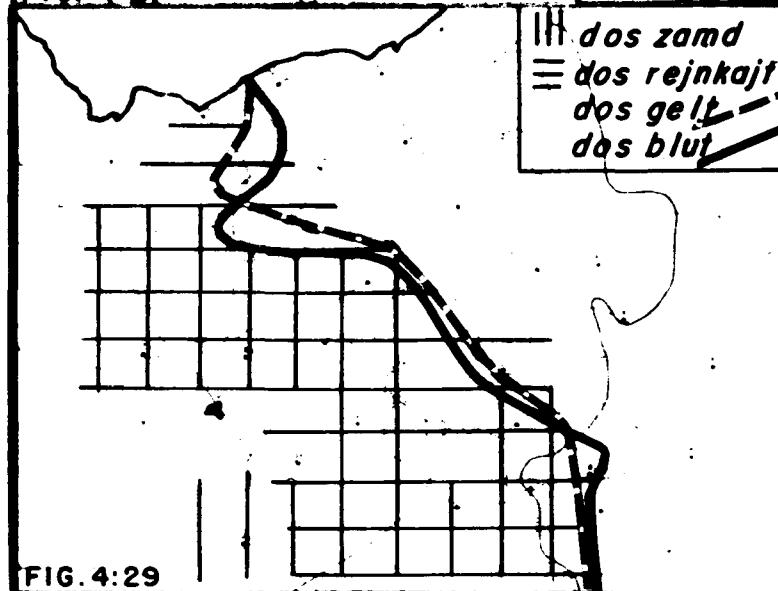
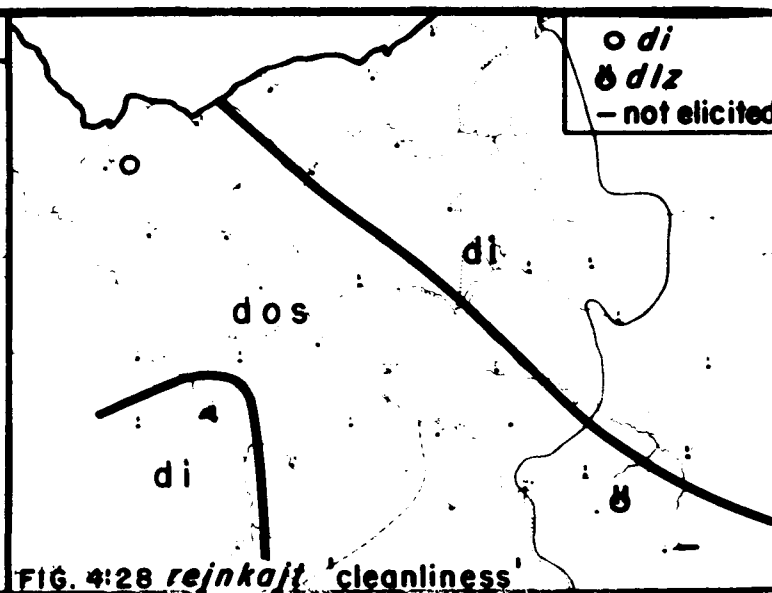
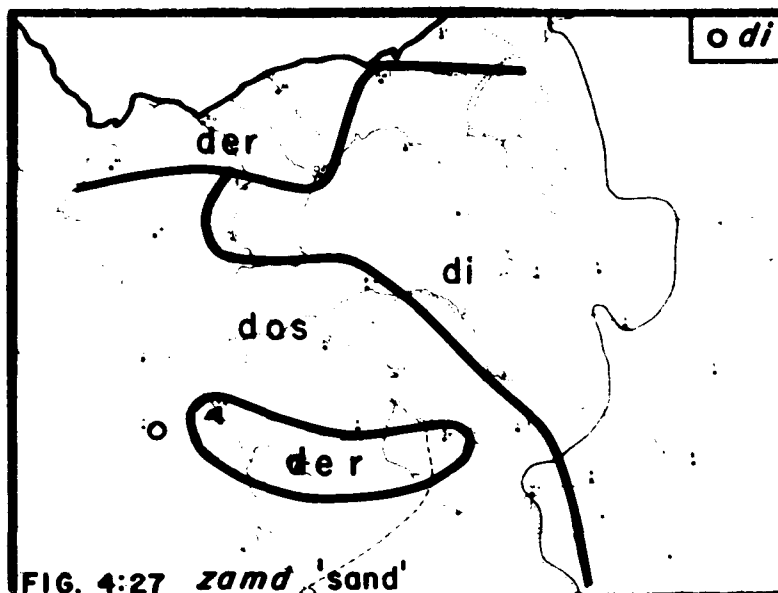




Two other words, of interest because of the discontinuity in the distribution of their variants, are illustrated in Figs. 4:25-4:26. The interrupted distribution of the older form der štal 'the stable' (Fig. 4:25) illustrates the efficacy of the change which penetrates beyond our area at least as far west as Plock. Still further west, in Koleč, the original masculine is again exclusive. In this case we lack the information that would permit us to define the border between the feminine in the west and the intermediate in the east.

Discontinuity in the case of the innovation di haldz 'the neck' (Fig. 4:26) is not explicable in terms of the normal effects of dialect contact. On the other hand, the western distribution of di may be attributable to the influence of Warsaw which, as a large urban center, often received immigrants from the northeast who by-passed the intervening small towns (cf. also Fig. 4:2)

4.12.3 New Neuters. Although they appear to be rare phenomena, shifts to the neuter have also taken place. Two cases seem to be semantically motivated changes. In one, der zamd 'the sand' (Fig. 4:27) has shifted to the mass gender in the east and to the neuter in a large western area. In the other, di rejnkajt 'the cleanliness' (Fig. 4:28) has changed to dos rejnkajt in the west. The distributions of the neuter forms of both have been combined in Fig. 4:29 with two of the isoglosses of Fig. 4:1. The latter indicate the general boundary to the east of which historical neuters have been reassigned to the new mass gender. It seems, then, that some historical feminines referring to similar concepts changed to the neuter in the west in order to conform to the pattern for naming substances and abstract qualities.



NEW NEUTERS TO CONFORM WITH  
SUBSTANCE NAMING PATTERN

Thus we see the imposition of semantic correlates upon an historically arbitrary gender system far to the west of the area in which specific factors, of whatever nature, gave rise to the correlation in the first place.

#### 4.13 Miscellaneous Aspects of Gender Change

4.13.1 Western Innovations. Although gender change has, on the whole, originated in the northeast, we have cited several instances of southwestern innovation as well. These include new masculines from the intermediate gender (§4.11.3) and new neuters in conformity with the pattern of substance naming (§4.12.3).

In Fig. 4:30 we illustrate an innovation that is inexplicable in terms of the cited motivations. The historical masculine, der Štul 'the chair' has been retained in the northeast. The new feminine form may have emanated from the south.

4.13.2 Discontinuous Survivals. In Fig. 4:31 we have combined the distributions of the historically expected gender of three nouns subject to gender fluctuation. Though survival areas of two of the three frequently overlap, there is only a very restricted area around Warsaw where all three do so. This is further evidence of the individuality of the processes at work.

4.13.3 Un-German Genders. There are a number of words whose alternate gender forms are all innovations in Yiddish. No trace of the original Germanic gender is in evidence. Each of these: hor, 'hair' (sg.)' (Fig. 4:32), kni 'knee', (Fig. 4:33), and šif 'ship' (Fig. 4:34), is historically neuter.



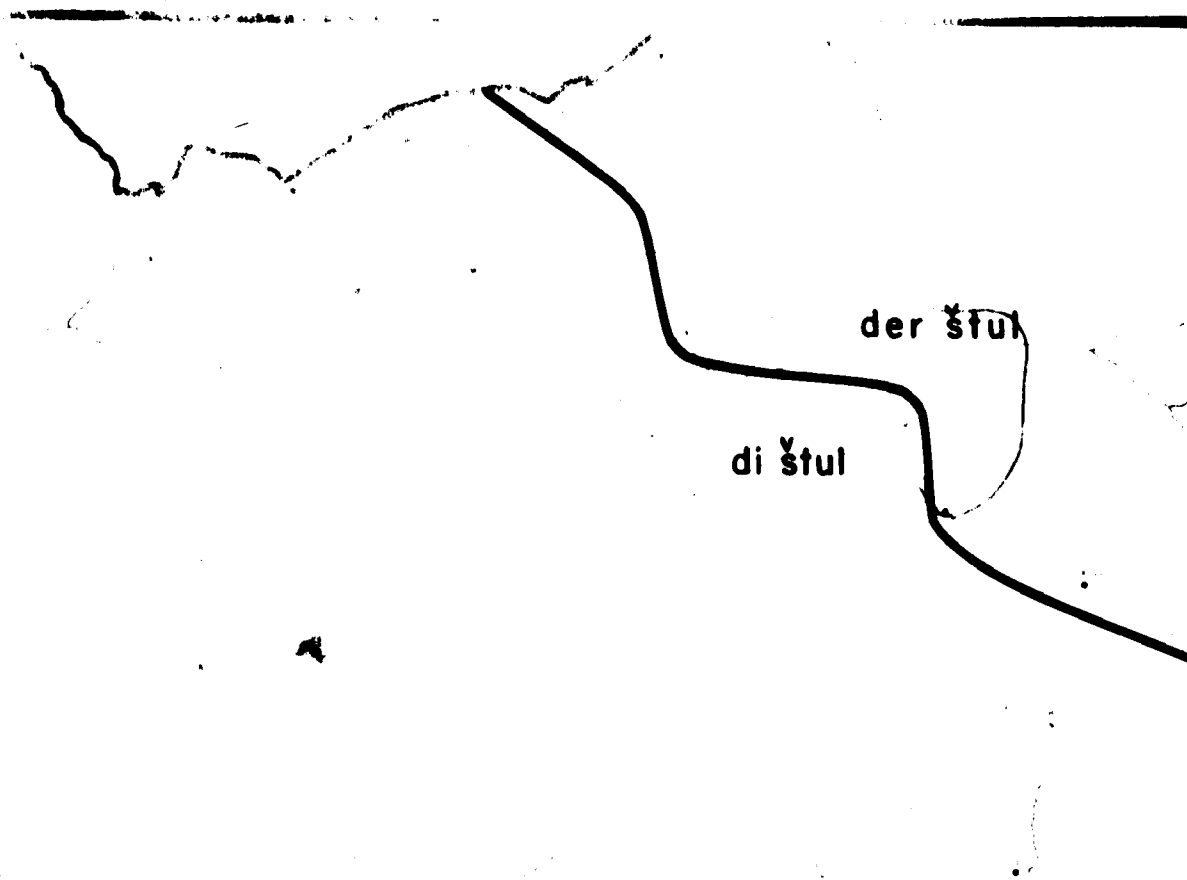


FIG. 4:30 'chair' Unmotivated SW Innovation



FIG. 4:31 SURVIVALS - DEGREES OF CORRESPONDENCE

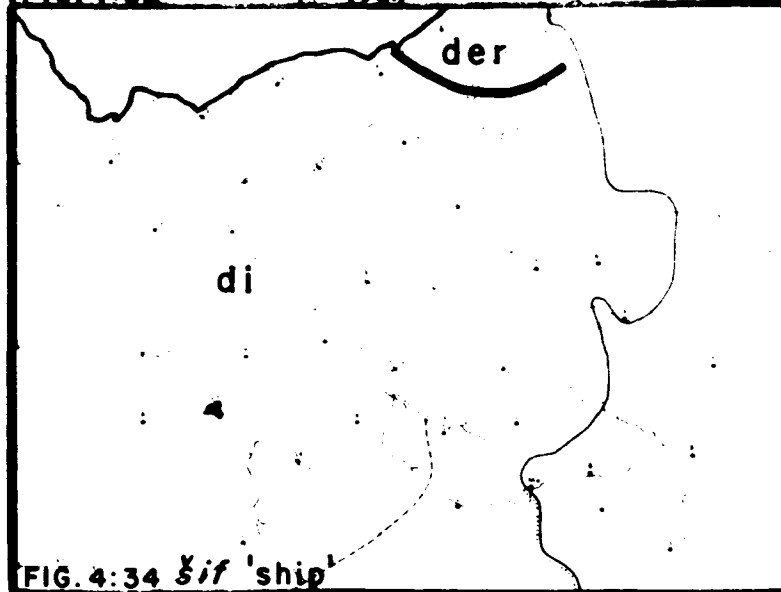
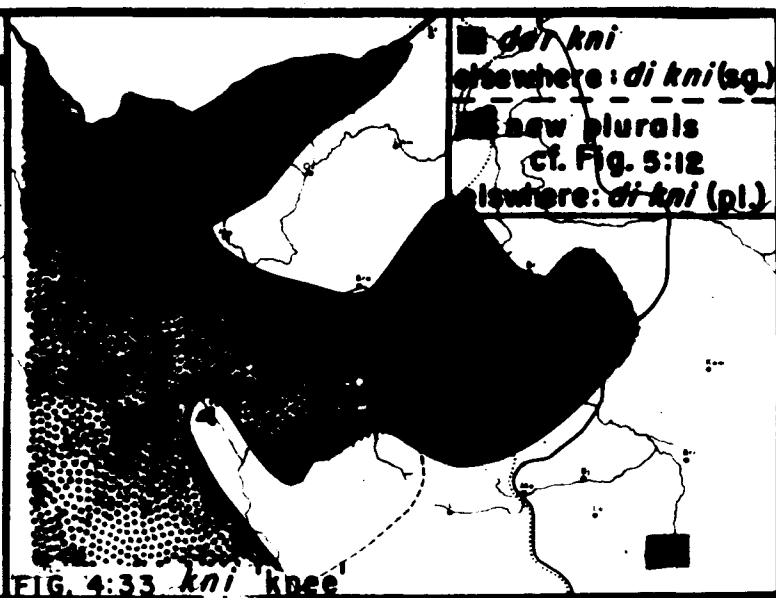
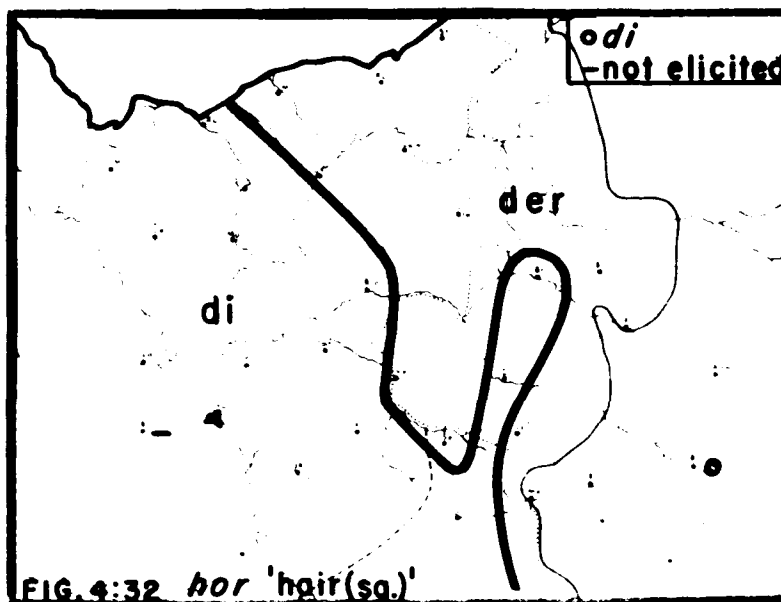
In the absence of a number marker the substantive hor tends to be ambiguous. Since its most frequent referent in Yiddish is a plural one (e.g. di hor zajnen lang 'the hair are long') the article of the plural was apparently extended to the singular as well. What may have originated as a change in number turned out, in effect, to be a gender change in the west. In the east, hor belongs appropriately to the mass gender. The words in this category, when used as count nouns, are typically masculine.

The development of di/der kni 'the knee' (Fig. 4:33) may be explained in a somewhat similar fashion. Historically, kni functions both as singular and plural. This ambiguity may have led to the extension of the plural article di to the singular (feminine in the west, intermediate in the east). In the west, homonymy subsequently stimulated the emergence of new suffixed plural forms (cf. Fig. 5:12 below), while bordering the wave of new plurals in the east, new masculines may have emerged from intermediates in the manner described previously.

Fig. 4:34 illustrates a relatively recent loanword in Yiddish. Informants invariably recognized šif 'ship' when prompted, but in most cases it had entered their vocabularies only at the time of emigration. Volunteered in its stead were a variety of Slavic-origin words designating the craft that sailed the nearby rivers. It is likely, therefore, that the stricture against accepting new neuter loans applies equally to neuters of German origin.

#### 4.14 Calquing as a Factor in Gender Shifts

Both Y. Mark (1944:90) and U. Weinreich (1961) cite evidence of a substantial degree of parallelism between new genders in Yiddish

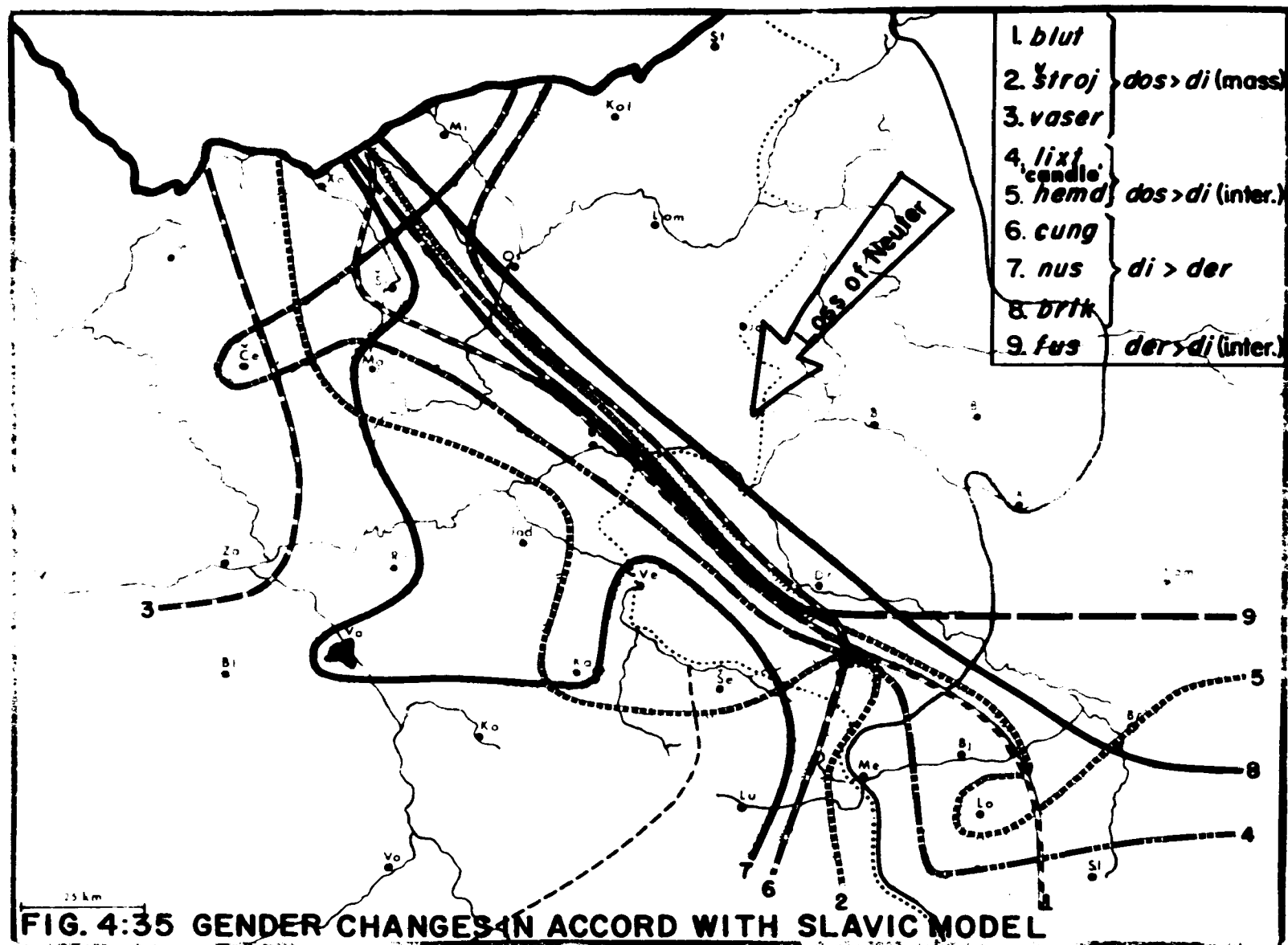


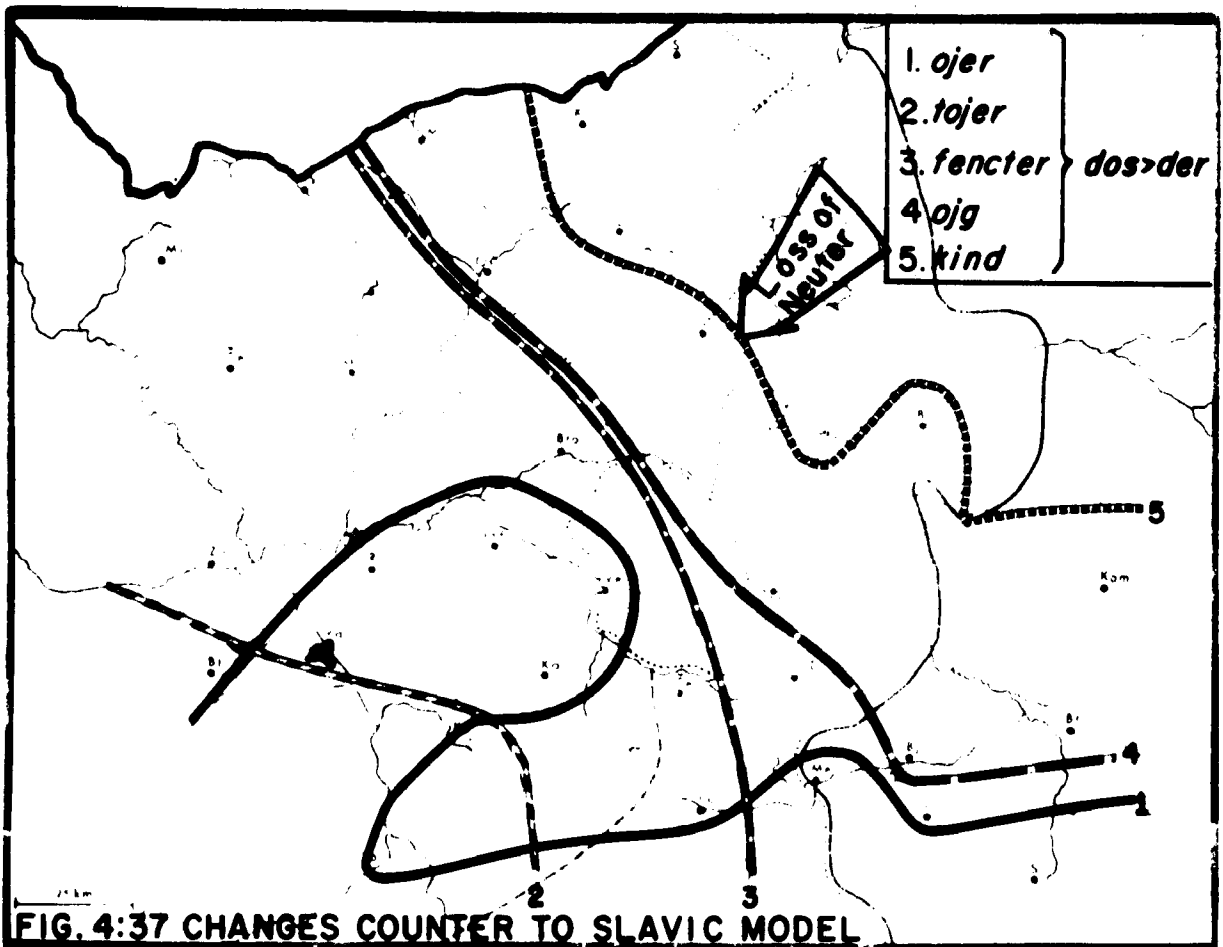
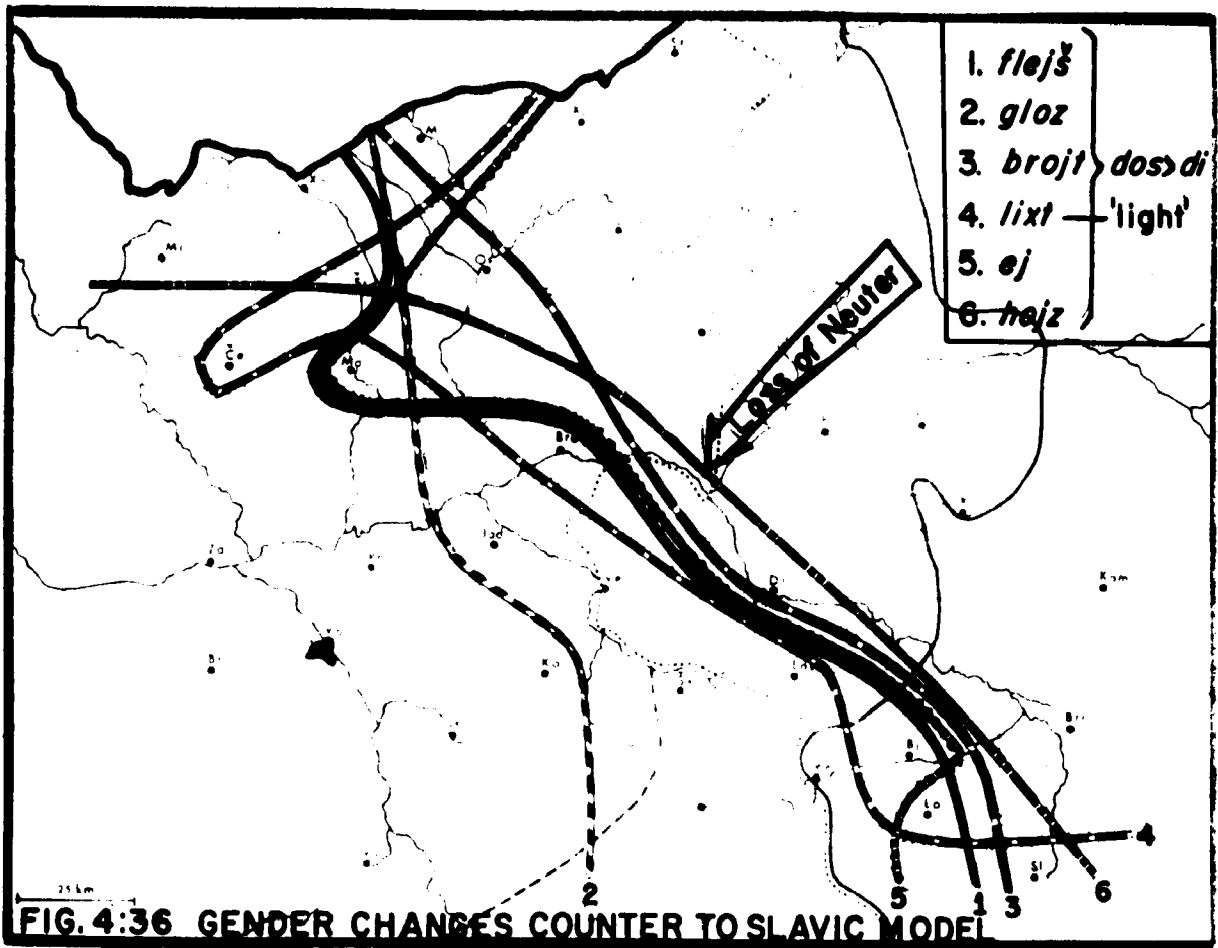
## UNGERMAN GENDERS

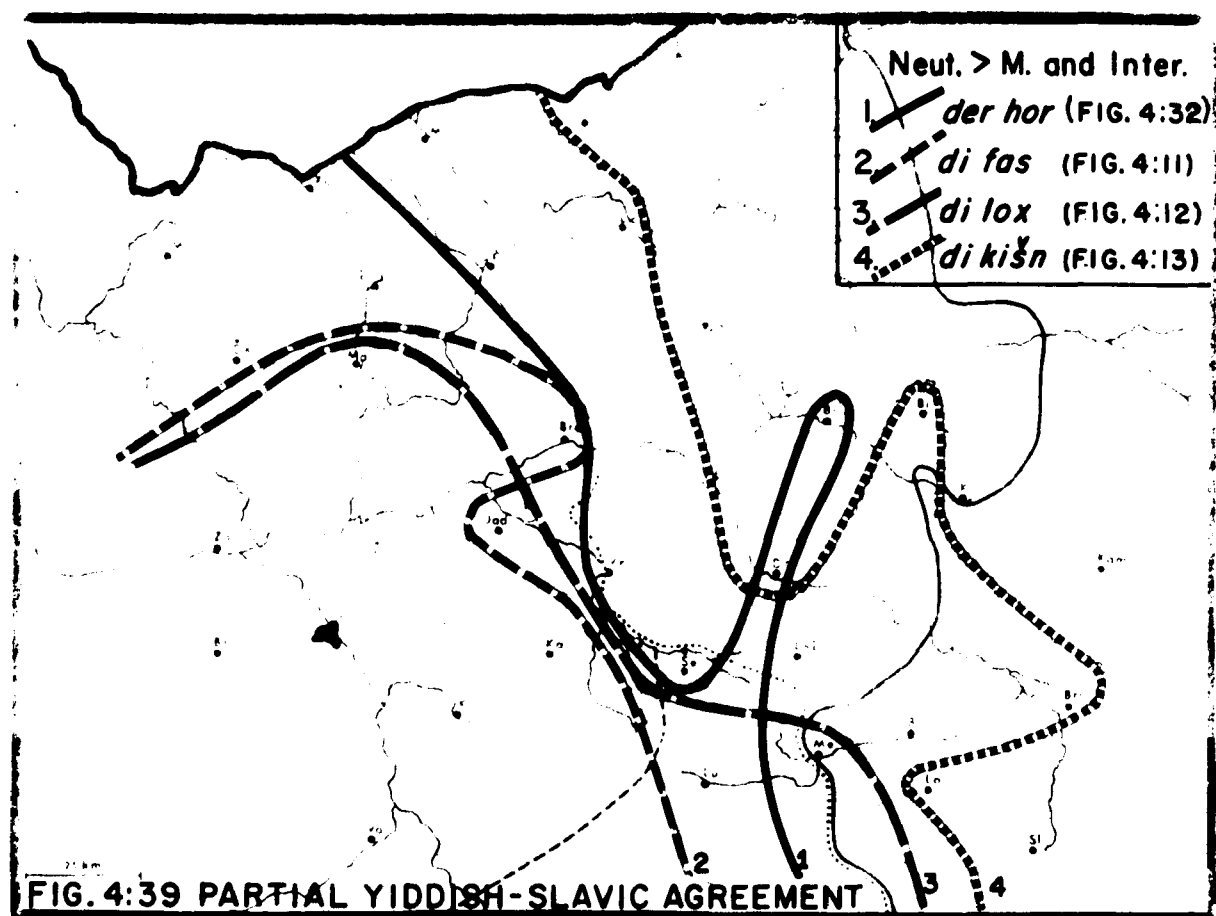
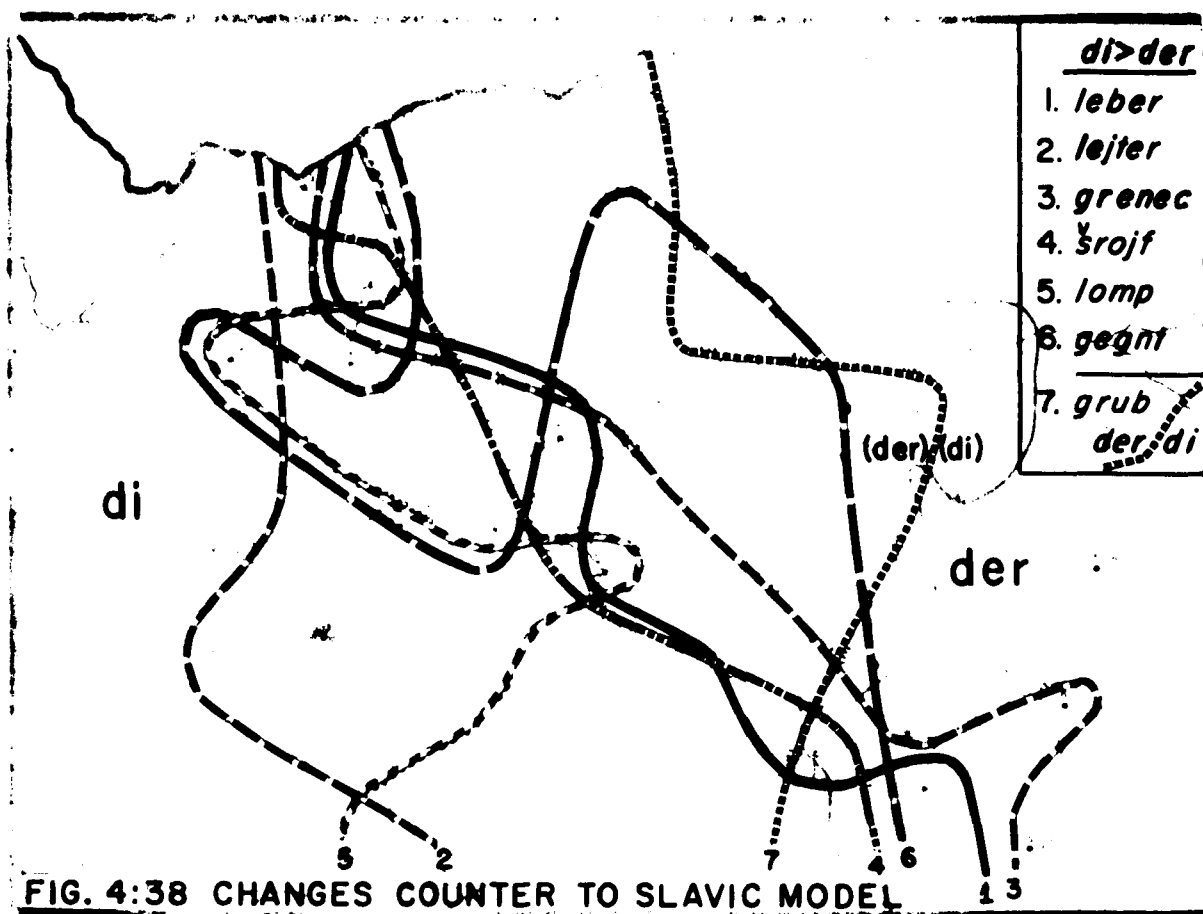
and the gender of corresponding nouns in coteritorial Slavic. Fig. 4:35 is a composite of words in this category; i.e. the new gender of each word in Yiddish corresponds with the gender of its synonym in Polish and Belorussian.

On the other hand, our data include a significant number of changes that run counter to the model of both Polish and Belorussian--whether or not these Slavic languages agree with one another--and it would be of some interest to see if there is any difference between the bundling tendency of these isoglosses (Figs. 4:36-4:38; also 4:39) and those that delimit NEY innovations that are in full agreement with Slavic.

No appreciable difference can be detected between, for example, Figs. 4:35 and 4:36. These maps are actually the components (each somewhat expanded) of the composite map in Fig. 4:7 which depicted the diffusion of new gender categories. Thus the degree of consistency that we find in the location of the isoglosses of a random selection of gender changes in Yiddish can have little to do with the imitation of Slavic genders. This is not to deny that changes in Slavic may have stimulated similar changes in Yiddish or, for that matter, that calquing of Slavic gender actually occurred. We have no way of evaluating, for example, the possible influence upon Yiddish of the loss of the neuter in the Belorussian dialects transitional to Polish (cf. Zdancewicz 1958: 213). But whatever the influences, it is only in the interplay of the structural components of each of the Yiddish dialects, and in the consequences of contact between two such dialects, that we will find an explanation for most of the linguistic and, perhaps, all of the geographic facts.







#### 4.15 Gender Variation in Relation to Other Discontinuities

In Fig. 4:40 we see that the isogloss between dos and di rejnkajt (Fig. 4:28) is almost identical with Isogloss 1. In two cases, kind (Fig. 4:9) and štul (Fig. 4:30), the lines run to the east of Isogloss 1 and it is only to the east of these again that we might expect to find an unvarying gender system. Additional regional studies may confirm this. Gender isoglosses approximating Isogloss 2 are also in evidence. We cite one of them not previously illustrated: dos ferd 'the horse (n.)' vs. the NEY innovation der ferd (m.). As we have seen, however, the vast majority of gender distinctions have their boundaries in the area between Isoglosses 1 and 2. In their westward diffusion, gender disturbances seem to meet their present limit along a line corresponding to the isoglosses of lejter (Fig. 4:17) and vaser (Fig. 4:2). The latter are good approximations of lexical Isogloss 3 (cf. Fig. 3:1). Still further west we will again, presumably, encounter a relatively unvarying gender system.

Had we no other proof of the hypothesis, the evidence of gender variation alone would suffice to show that we find ourselves in the heart of a transition area whose phenomena are the result of contact between two highly differentiated dialects.

#### 4.2 The Case System

Germanic case distinctions have been drastically reduced even in Standard Yiddish. Preserved primarily in the noun modifiers and pronouns, case inflections are almost non-existent in the nouns themselves. In the dialects their use has been even further curtailed.



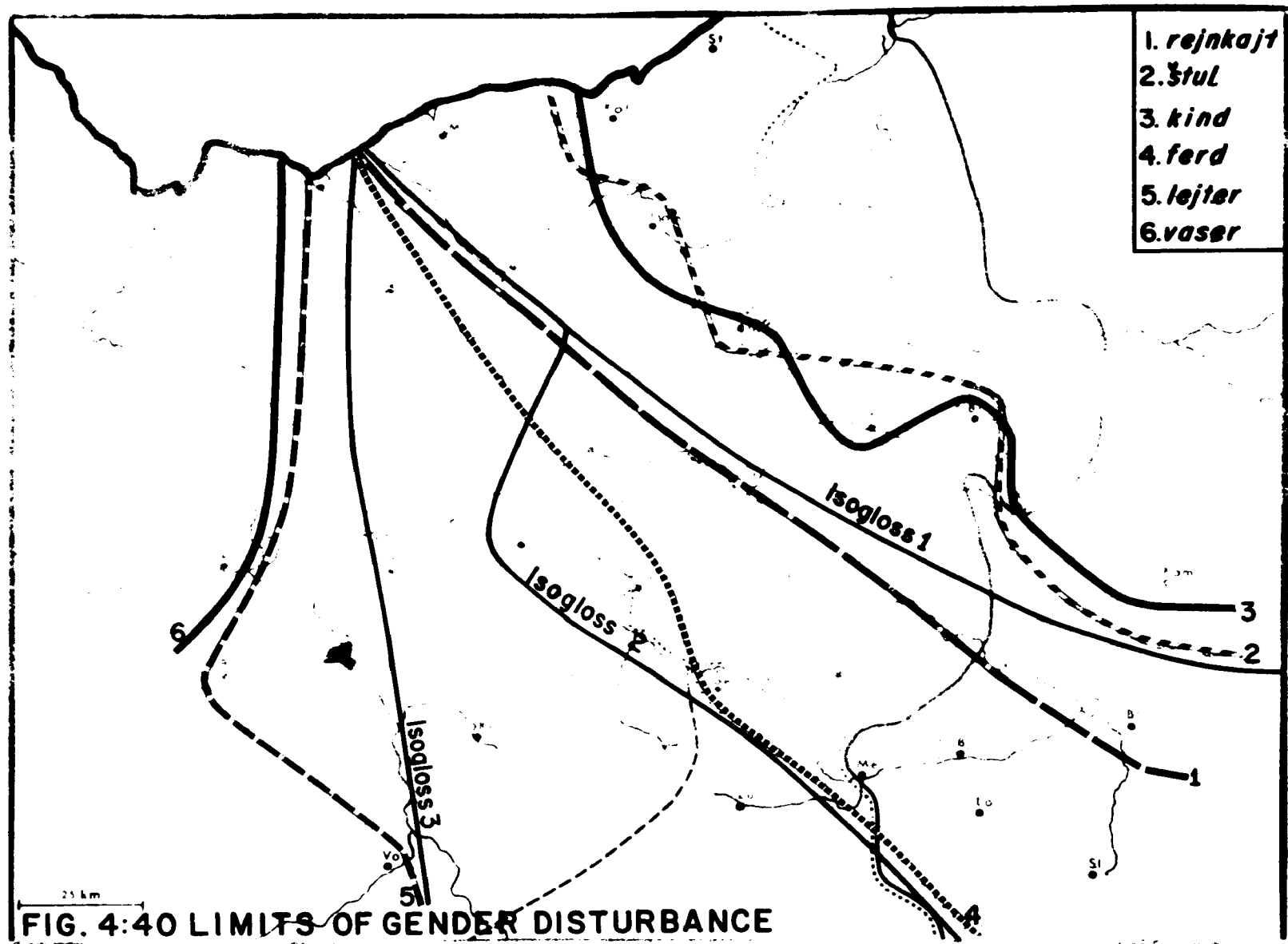


FIG. 4:40 LIMITS OF GENDER DISTURBANCE

#### 4.21 The Pronouns

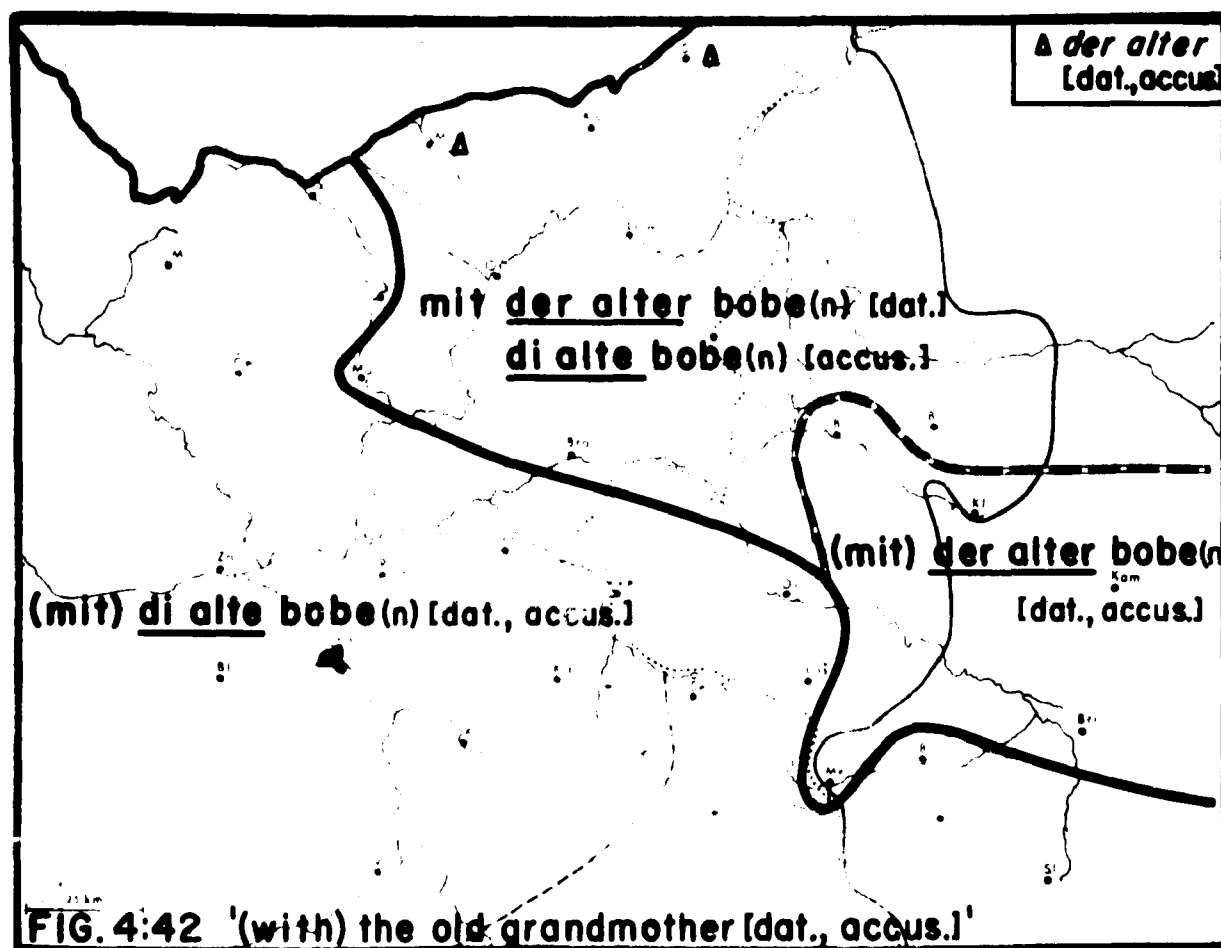
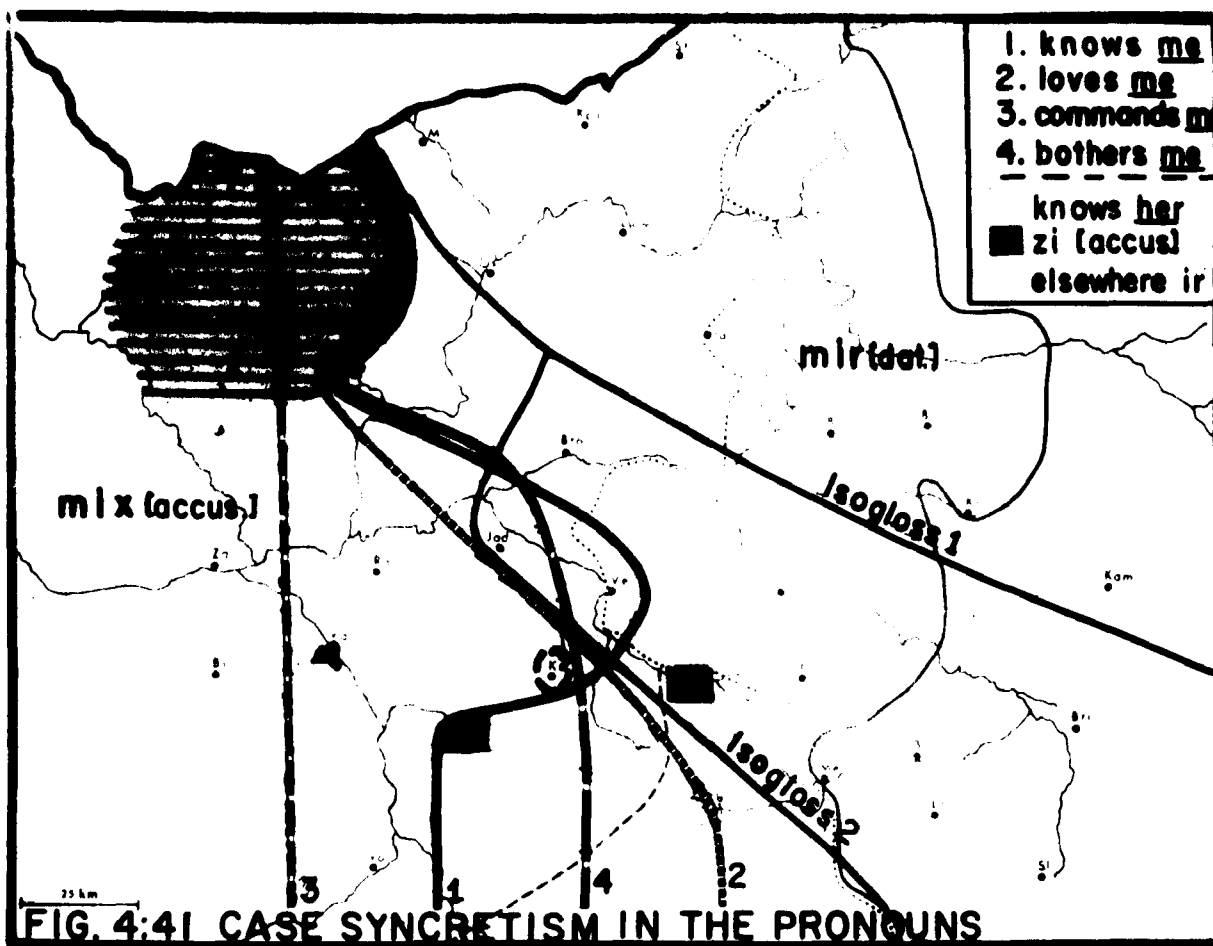
Case distinctions in the Standard Yiddish pronoun system are illustrated in Table 3. Note that the dative and accusative have merged in the third person masculine singular. Thus it is best to consider im 'him' as a pronoun in the 'objective' case. Dialectal variation is described below.

TABLE 3

#### CASE DISTINCTIONS AMONG THE PRONOUNS IN STANDARD YIDDISH

<u>Singular</u>				<u>Plural</u>	
	Nominative	Accusative	Dative	Nominative	Oblique
1	ix	mix	mir	mir	undz
2	du	dix	dir	ir	ajx
3F	zi		ir	zej	
3N	es		im		
3M	er	im			

From Fig. 4:41 we learn that the standard distinction between the dative and accusative forms of the third person feminine singular is only vestigially preserved. The contrast ix ken zi 'I know her (accus.)', ix helf ir 'I help her (dat.)' is restricted to the north-west. Elsewhere, the dative ir 'her' serves in accusative contexts as well. It is reasonable to assume that the still more general collapse of dative-accusative distinctions in the masculine, in favor



of the dative pronoun, has served as the model for a similar development in the feminine.

First-person distinctions have been better preserved, though here too we discover that the dative form mir 'me' serves all non-nominative functions throughout most of the area; e.g. zi ken mir 'she knows me', zi hot mir lib 'she loves me', er hejst mir 'he commands me', es art mir nit 'it doesn't bother me'. It is perhaps to be expected that the accusative will yield most readily in the context of verba dicendi, the majority of which require the dative; e.g. gehejsn 'commanded' is probably felt to be much like gezogt 'told' or dercéjlt 'told (related)' which normally govern the dative case.

Note that the accusative mix hardly exists to the east of Isogloss 2, while the western boundary of case syncretism is very much like lexical Isogloss 3 (cf. Fig. 3:1). Second-person distinctions parallel those of the first person.<sup>6</sup>

#### 4.22 The Noun Modifiers

The system of the definite articles is much the same as that of the adjectives in Standard Yiddish. The two can be treated together though some degree of separate mention is necessary to bring out the salient points in each. In Table 4 we have presented

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<sup>6</sup> In checking gaps in an interview from the Belorussian area, we have had some difficulty in distinguishing, from the taped record, whether the informant said mir or mix 'me'. In the informant's speech, the velar [r] is consistently unvoiced before voiceless consonants, e.g. [doxt] 'there' [haxt] 'hard', while [x] is voiced in voiced environments, e.g. [iygej] 'I go'. Perhaps we may profitably seek the origin of the dative-accusative merger of mir, mix in these conditions. [On [r/x] cf. Chap. 5, fn. 23; on problems of voicing cf. §5.22.)

the case distinctions preserved in the standard language.

TABLE 4

## ARTICLE AND ADJECTIVE DISTINCTIONS IN STANDARD YIDDISH

Case	Masculine	Neuter	Feminine	Plural
	'the large table'	'the old horse'	'the right hand'	
Nom.	der grojser tiš	dos alte ferd an alt ferd	di rechte hant	di ...e
Accus.	dem grojsn tiš			
Dat.		dem altn ferd an alt(n) ferd	der rexter hant	

Again we find that neither gender nor case distinctions have been preserved in the plural. In the singular, the masculine distinguishes only the nominative from the "objective" case while the neuter alone has preserved a remnant of the old weak-strong distinction in the adjective: after the indefinite article, the nominative and accusative adjective (and optionally the dative) has no ending.

(For the reader with a knowledge of German we note that Yiddish has no genitive case. The Germanic genitive has been replaced by a possessive, formed by adding -s to the dative form of the animate singular noun. The possessive of inanimate and plural nouns is usually expressed syntactically by a prepositional construction.)

We next consider the different genders separately.

4.22.1 The Feminine Noun Modifiers. Fig. 4:42 depicts a feminine noun in both a dative and an accusative context. While only the

northeast distinguishes the two, we find that the merger in the west has favored the form of the accusative, in contrast to the southeast where the dative has been favored.<sup>7</sup>

4.22.2 The Intermediate Gender. We observed in an earlier discussion (§4.11.12) that the intermediate gender functions only in the eastern portion of our area. Its western correspondents are generally nouns in the feminine or neuter. The definite article of the intermediate gender has several defining features:

4.22.21 Following a Preposition with a Final Vowel or a Final Consonant Other Than -n. If the preposition preceding the dative article der is other than one ending in -n (e.g. af 'on, upon', cu 'to'), and no adjective intervenes between the article and the intermediate noun, the usual result in the east is a merger of the article with the preposition; e.g. di vant, (af der >) afn vant 'upon the wall' (Fig. 4:43); di štot, (ojser der >) ojsern štot 'outside the city' (Fig. 4:44), di cung, (af der >) afn cung 'on the tongue' (Fig. 4:45).<sup>8</sup> In the west, mergers of the preposition with an article occur only in the case of masculine and neuter nouns, that is, when the oblique form of the definite article is dem.

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<sup>7</sup>Y. Mark was mistaken in assuming that syncretism in the west resulted from the loss of [-r] (1938:266f). His error stems from the difficulty which any speaker of NEY might be expected to encounter in attempting to distinguish CY unstressed final [e < ər] from [ə] e.g. NEY [grinər] 'green (m.)', [grine] 'green (f.)', vs. CY [grīne] (m.), [grinə] (f.) (cf. below Fig. 5:107).

<sup>8</sup>Note, however, that afn cung represents the intermediate gender only in a narrow strip to the west of the area in which the same phrase is a contraction of the preposition plus the oblique masculine article dem. This disparity in location, i.e. the fact that the intermediate form di cung occurs between di cung (f.) and der cung (m.) supports the hypothesis that the intermediate gender emerged

4.22.22 Following a Preposition in Final -n. If the definite article is preceded by a preposition in final -n, (e.g. fun 'of, from', in 'in, into' on 'upon, onto'), and no adjective intervenes between the article and the intermediate noun, the possibilities in the east are two-fold: the article may be deleted without depriving the noun phrase of its definiteness, e.g. in vant 'into the wall'; alternatively the dative article der follows the preposition: in der vant. In the west, only in di vant occurs (cf. §4.22.1).

The most consistent area of article deletion is the northeast, but the phenomenon has penetrated the southeast and northwest as well (Figs. 4:47-4:49).

4.22.23 Following a Preposition Plus an Adjective. In a construction of the type Preposition + Indefinite Article + Ajective + Intermediate Noun, none of the forms is further inflected; e.g. di flaš 'the bottle (nom.)' (fun) a fule flaš ' (from) a full bottle (obl.)' (Fig. 4:50). On the face of it, there is no distinction between the forms in the east and in the west. The difference emerges only when we compare Figs. 4:42 and 4:50.

If a definite article precedes the adjective, inflections follow the pattern of true feminine nouns: fun der fuler flaš.

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before the general reassignment of nouns to new gender categories. On the secondary development of masculines from intermediates cf. above §§4.11.3, 4.12.4.

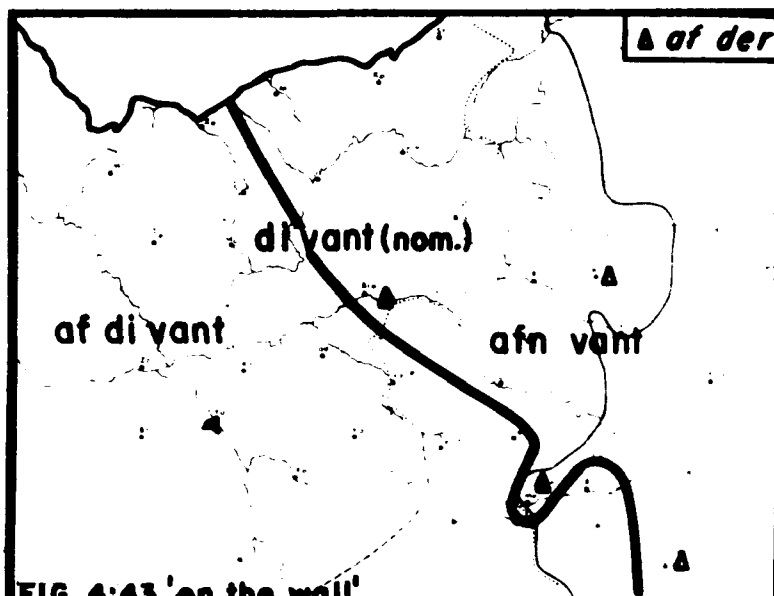


FIG. 4:43 'on the wall'

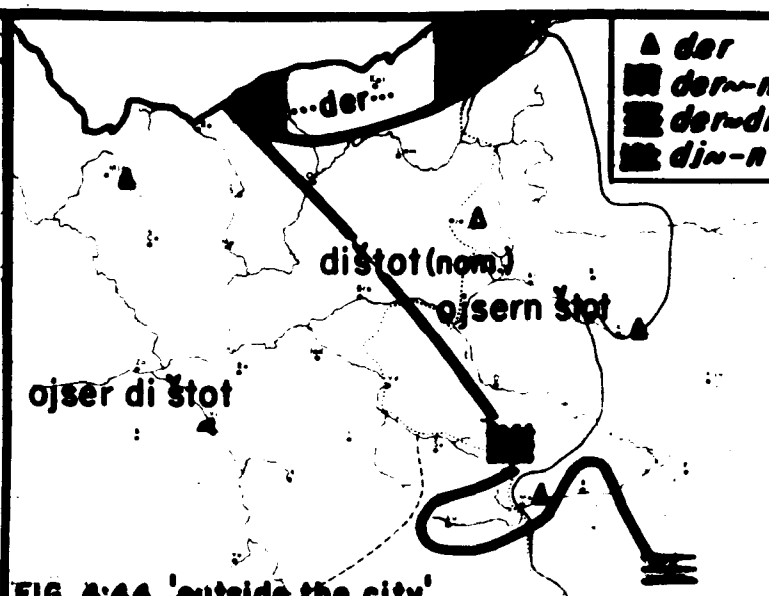


FIG. 4:44 'outside the city'

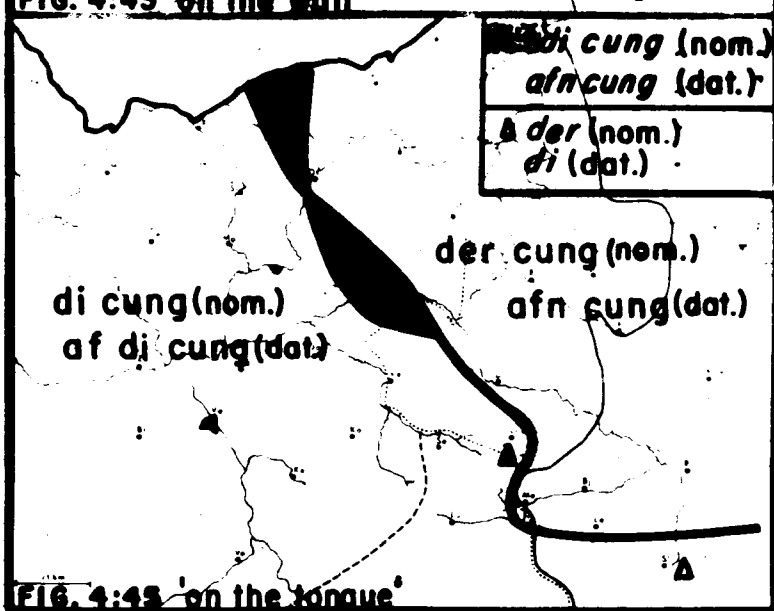


FIG. 4:45 'on the tongue'

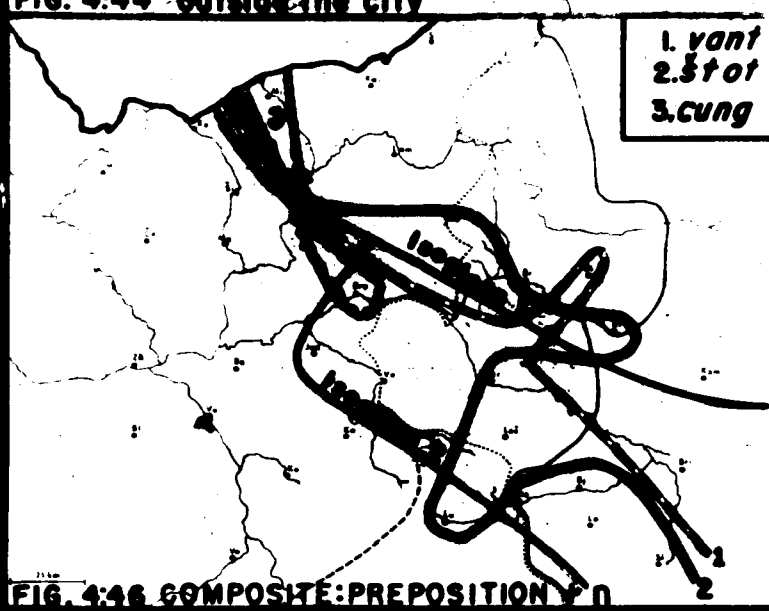


FIG. 4:46 COMPOSITE: PREPOSITION P n



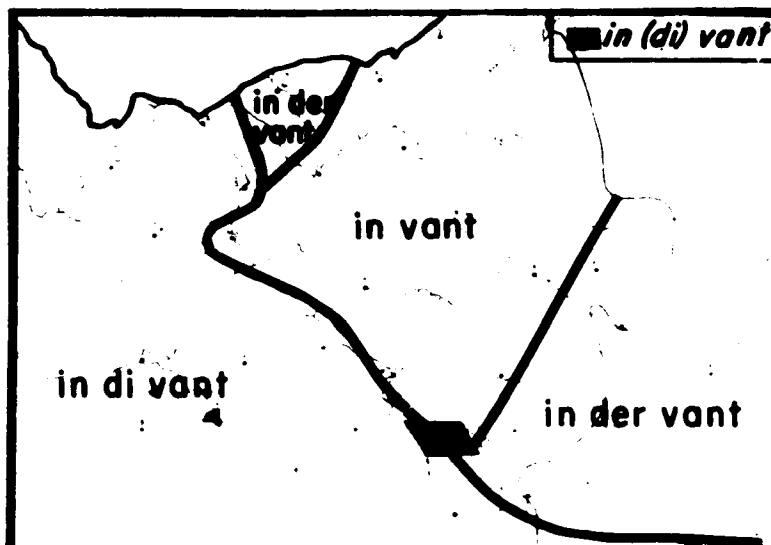


FIG. 4:47 'into the wall'

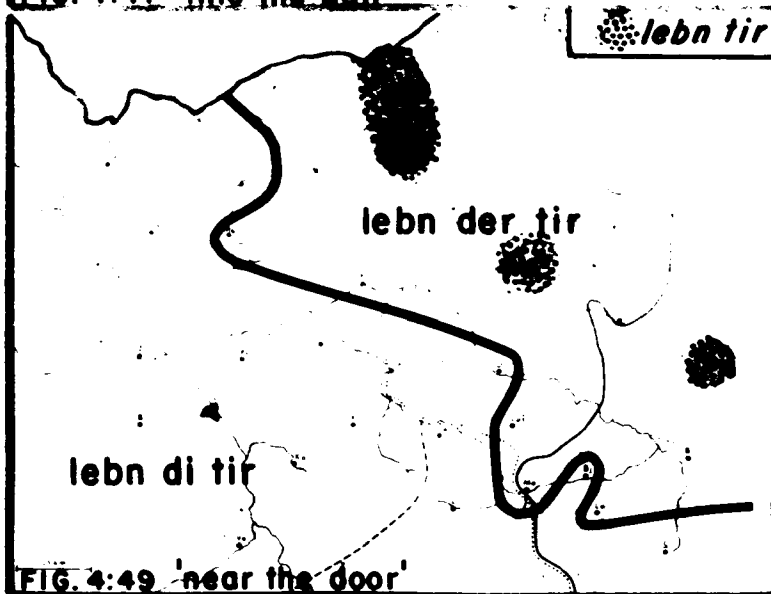


FIG. 4:49 'near the door'

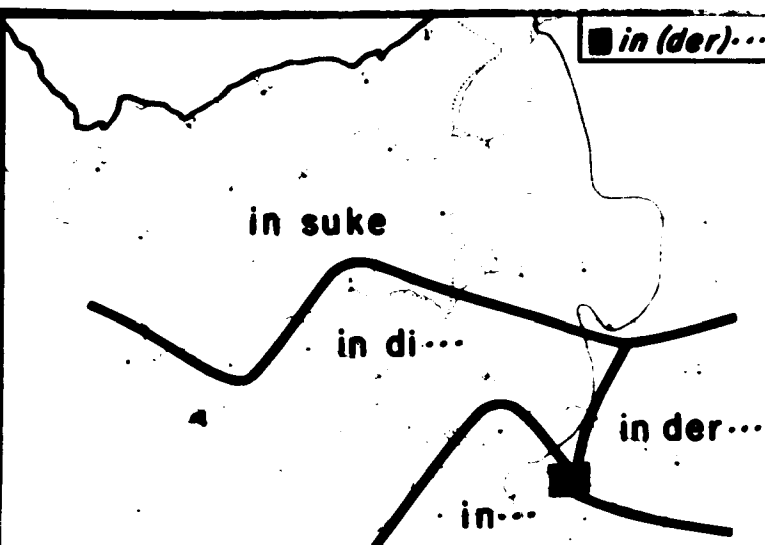


FIG. 4:48 'in the sukkah'

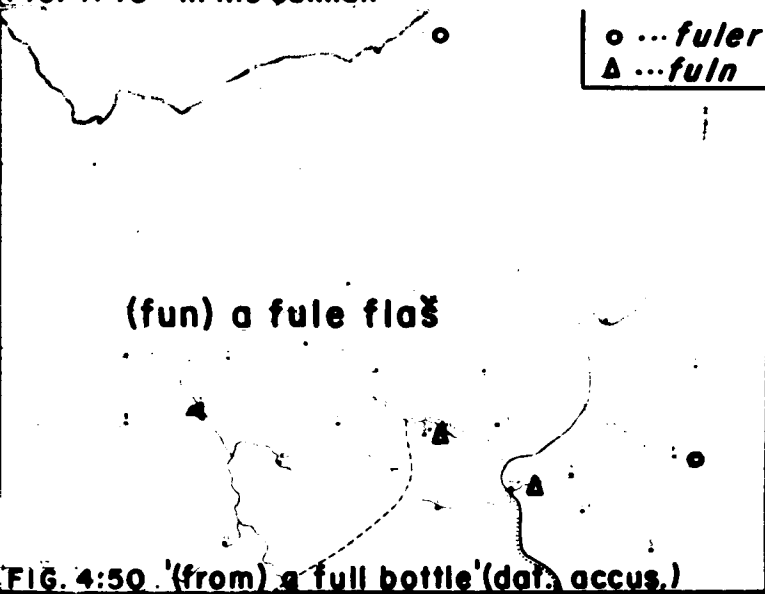


FIG. 4:50 '(from) a full bottle' (dat. accus.)

In summary we compare the following paradigms:

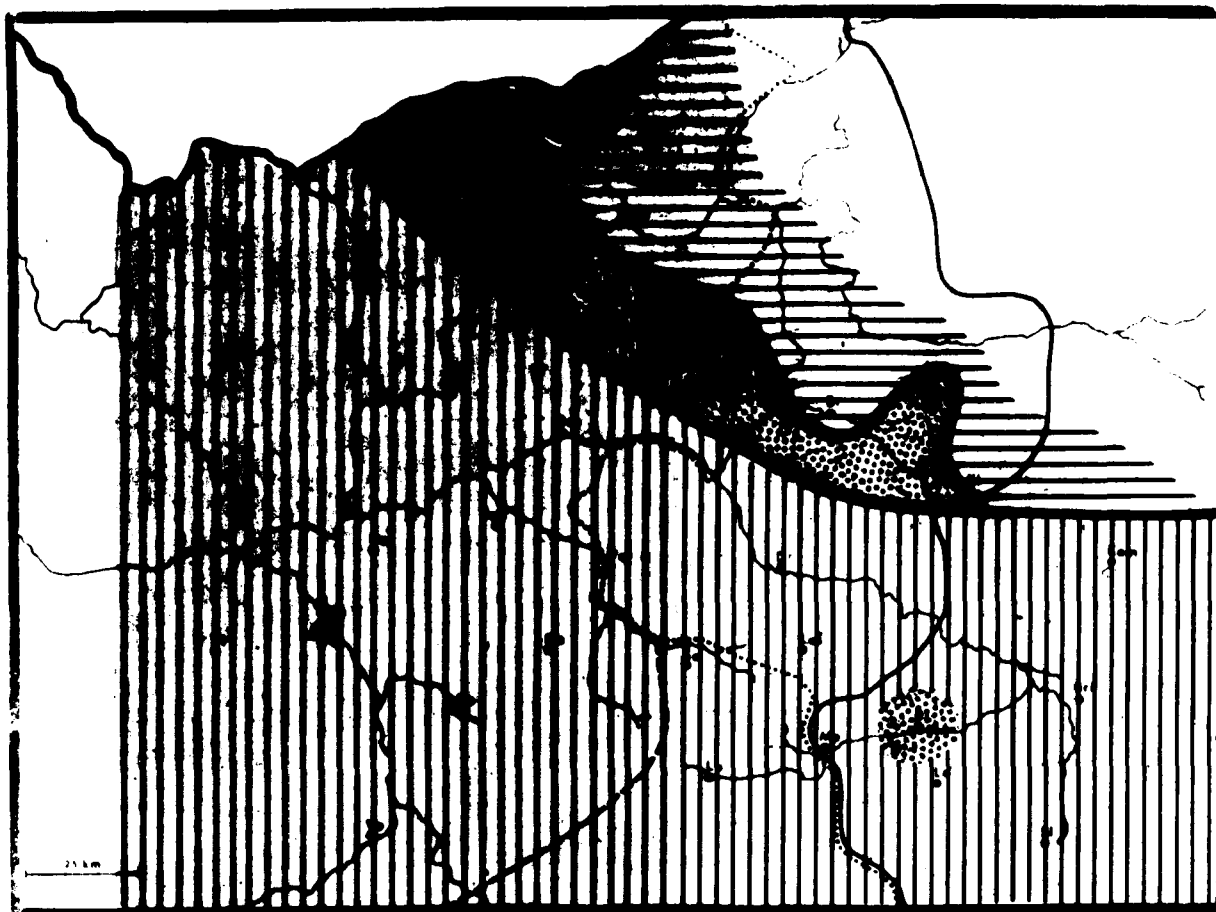
	<u>Feminine: švester</u> 'sister'	<u>Intermediate: flaš</u> 'bottle'
Nom.-Acc.	di (gute) švester	di flaš      di fule flaš
Dative	mit der (guter) švester	mitn flaš      mit der fuler flaš
		in flaš      mit a fule flaš

4.22.3 The Neuter. Our evidence for this gender is too scanty to permit generalization. Nor is it entirely clear whether Fig. 4:51 illustrates a degree of case syncretism or simply an instance of gender vacillation. But the particular word illustrated here, kind 'child', as one of the few vestiges of the neuter in NEY, is of great importance for the long-range history of the neuter gender in Yiddish. The word kind has been found even in the neuterless dialects, with remnants of the neuter article. In addition to der kind and di kind we have instances of s kind (< dos kind) and, where the s loses its function completely, di skind. Though this might suggest that the neuter dos could be expected to occur in the accusative case even within the area where kind is decidedly masculine, we would hesitate to decide that the use of dem kind in the accusative within the neuter area (cf. also Fig. 4:9) suggests anything more than free alternation in gender.

#### 4.23 The Nouns

Names of persons are inflected for case in Standard Yiddish. In contrast, other nouns are not, with the exception of ten or so.

Fig. 4:52 illustrates the two common-nouns zejde 'grandfather' and tate 'father' whose inflected forms zejdn and tatn have the widest



|||| *dos kind* (nom., accus.)

.....  
 ▒ *dos kind* (nom.)

.....  
 -----  
*dem~dos kind* (obl.)

==== *der kind* (nom.)

.....  
 -----  
*dem kind* (obl.)

▒▒ *der kind* (nom.)

.....  
 -----  
*dem~dos kind* (obl.)

FIG. 4:51 *kind* 'child'

distribution. On the other hand, the examples, name 'mother' (Fig. 4:53) jid 'Jew' (Fig. 4:54), and menč 'person' (Fig. 4:55), yield the more usual northeast-southwest division. The word bobe 'grandmother' (Fig. 4:56-4:58) is, however, significantly different in each of its illustrated occurrences. The inflected form occurs most consistently in a dative context (Fig. 4:56). In accusative contexts bobe and boben appear to be in free variation.

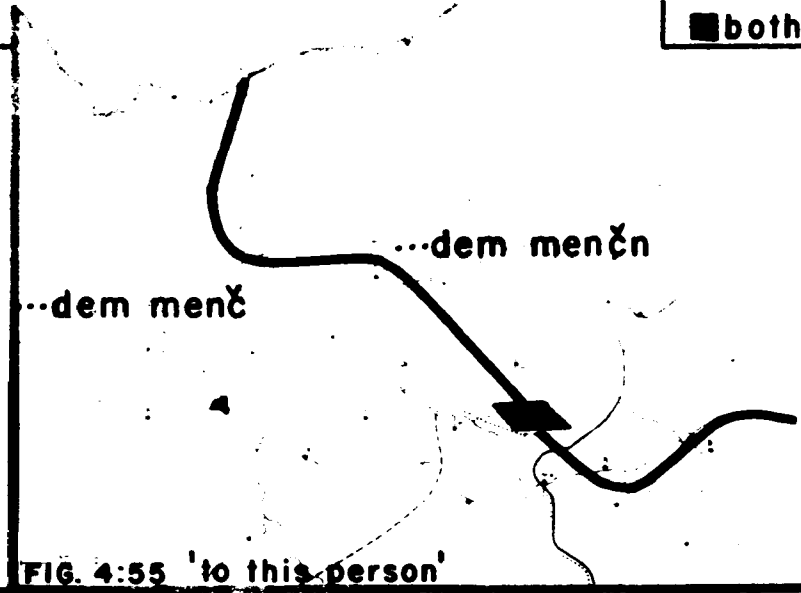
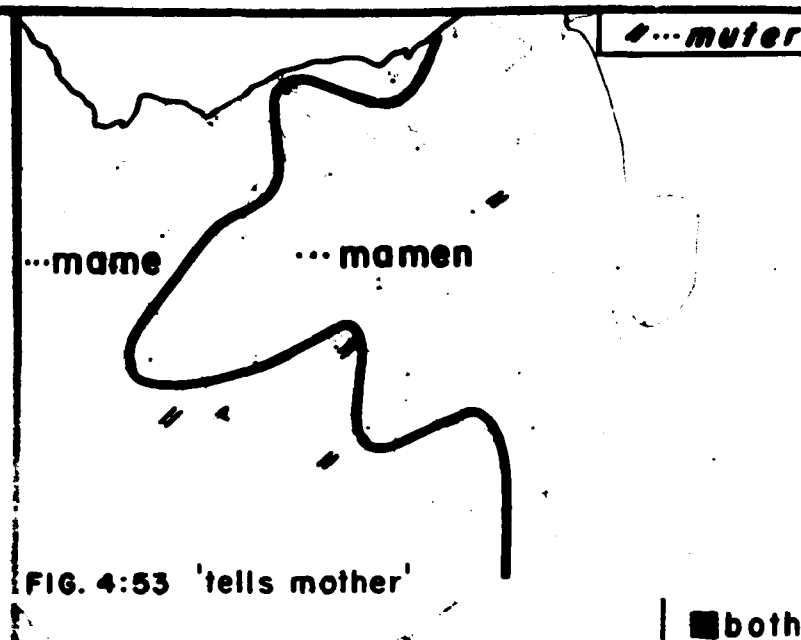
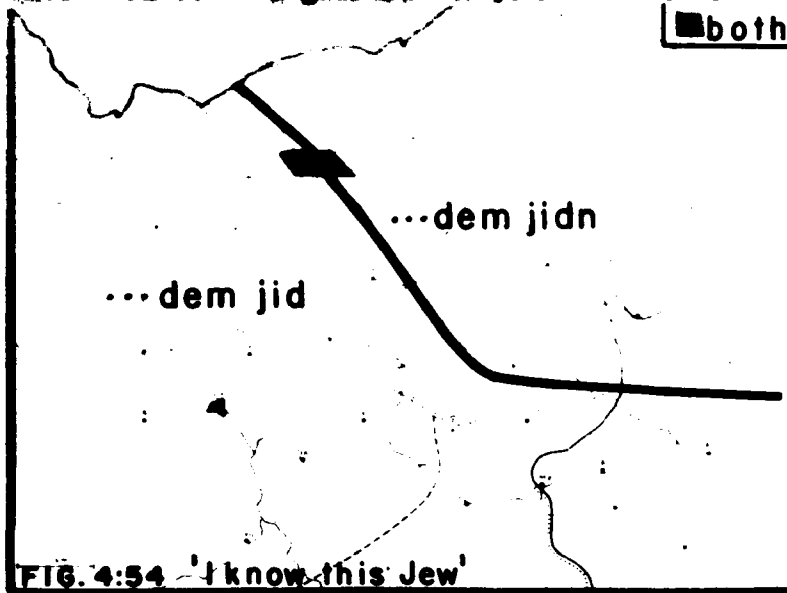
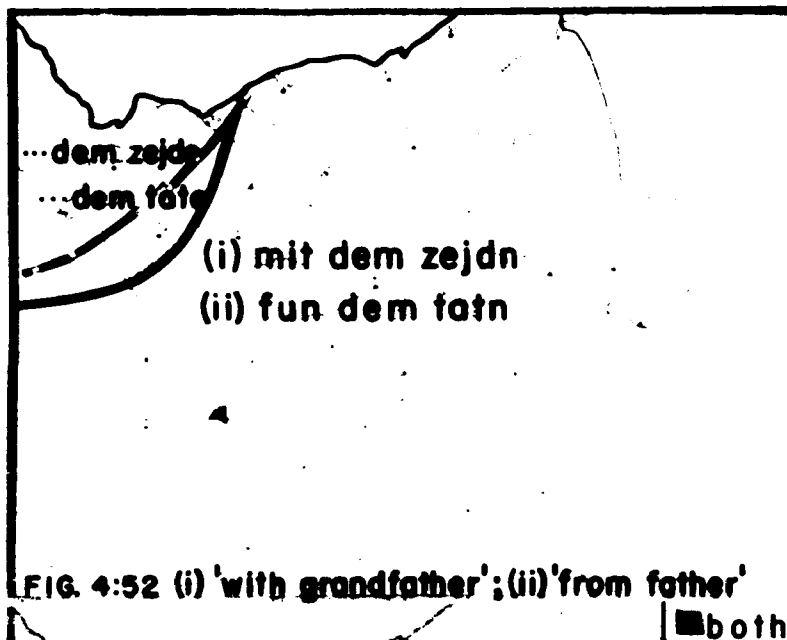
#### 4.24 The Prepositions

The traditional Germanic distinction between prepositions governing either the dative or the accusative (or both under varying circumstances) has not been preserved in Yiddish. In the standard language all prepositions govern the dative. In the dialects, however, there does appear to be a device to compensate for this merger. Figs. 4:59-4:60 illustrate two instances of the occurrence of a new type of prepositional phrase where 'motion towards' is generally indicated by the occurrence, in sentence-final position, of the word arajn 'into' e.g. in feld 'in the field', but in feld arajn 'into the field'.

In Fig. 4:61 we have delimited all the communities where phrases of this type were recorded in a variety of contexts. It seems, from the specific examples (Figs. 4:59-4:60) that even this innovation is a receding phenomenon.

#### 4.25 Summary

Other than the fact that instances of case syncretism occur throughout our area, it is difficult to make a general statement of



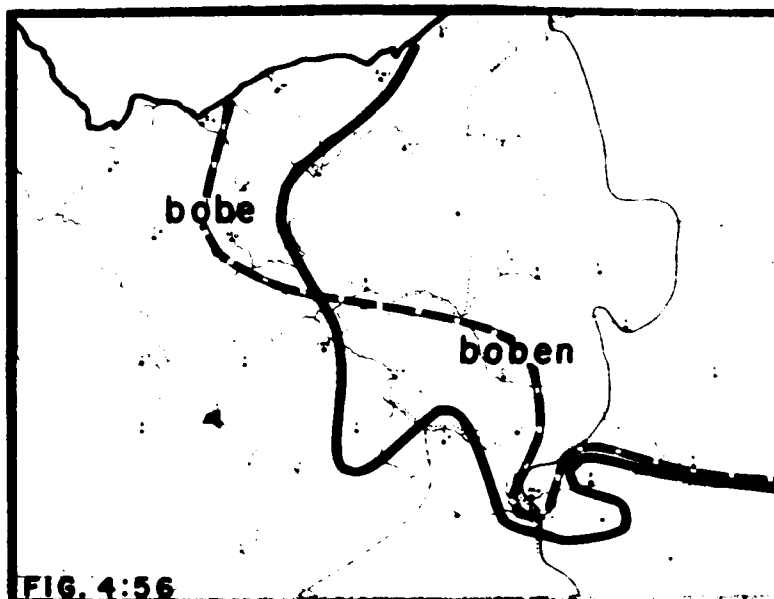


FIG. 4:56

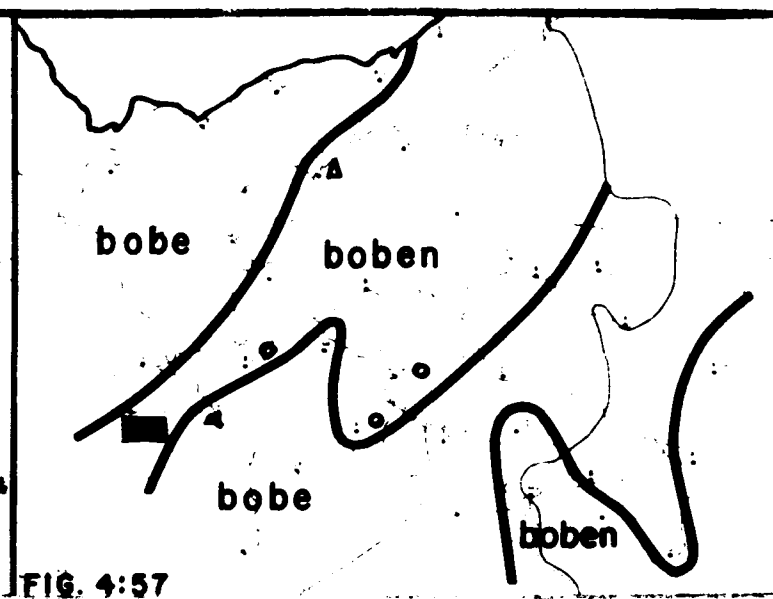


FIG. 4:57

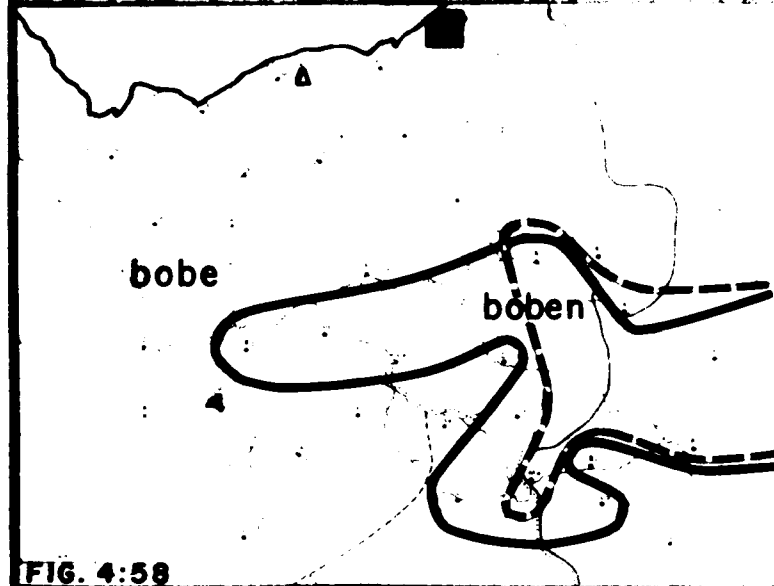


FIG. 4:58

FIG. 4:56

'with grandmother' (dat.)  
mit di... / mit der...

FIG. 4:57

'... love grandmother' (accus.)

■ bobe ~ boben

○ bobm

Δ der...

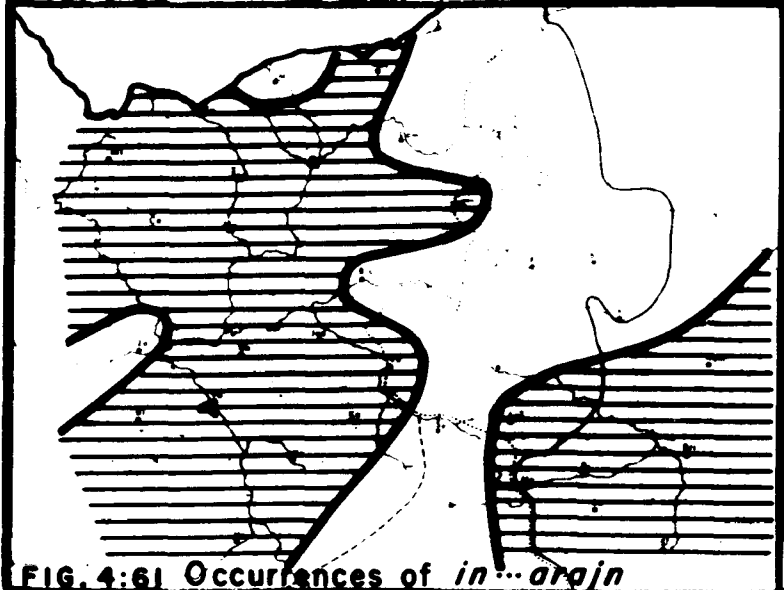
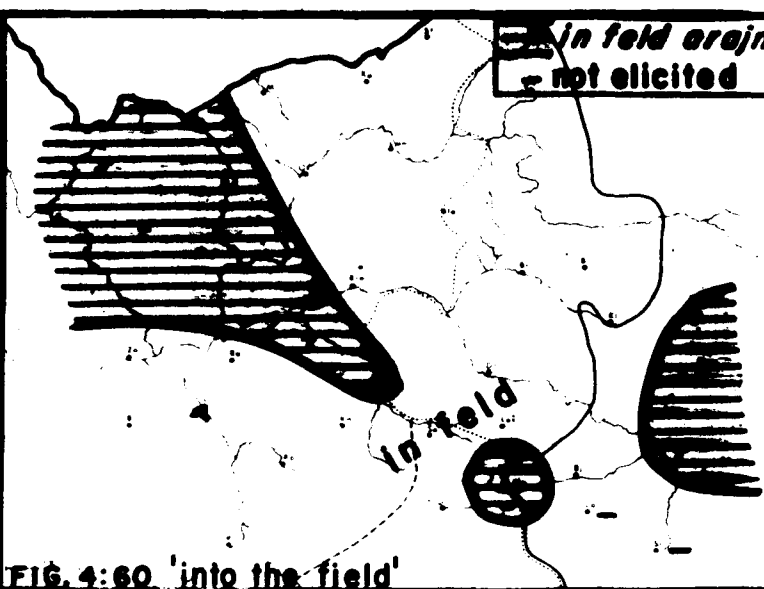
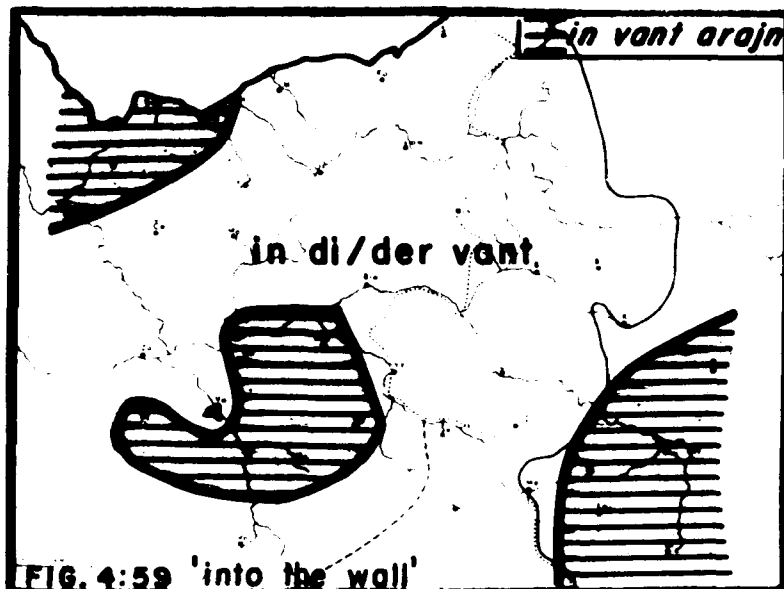
FIG. 4:58

'... remember grandmother' (accus.)

■ boben

di... / der...

Δ der...



## PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

structural validity from the available data. The phenomenon has different regional manifestations (Fig. 4:62). In the entire east, oblique case distinctions have been eliminated in the pronoun system, while in the same area, but largely in the northeast, case inflections have been preserved in a subclass of common-nouns. In the system of noun modification the oblique cases have merged, with different results, in both the west and the southeast.

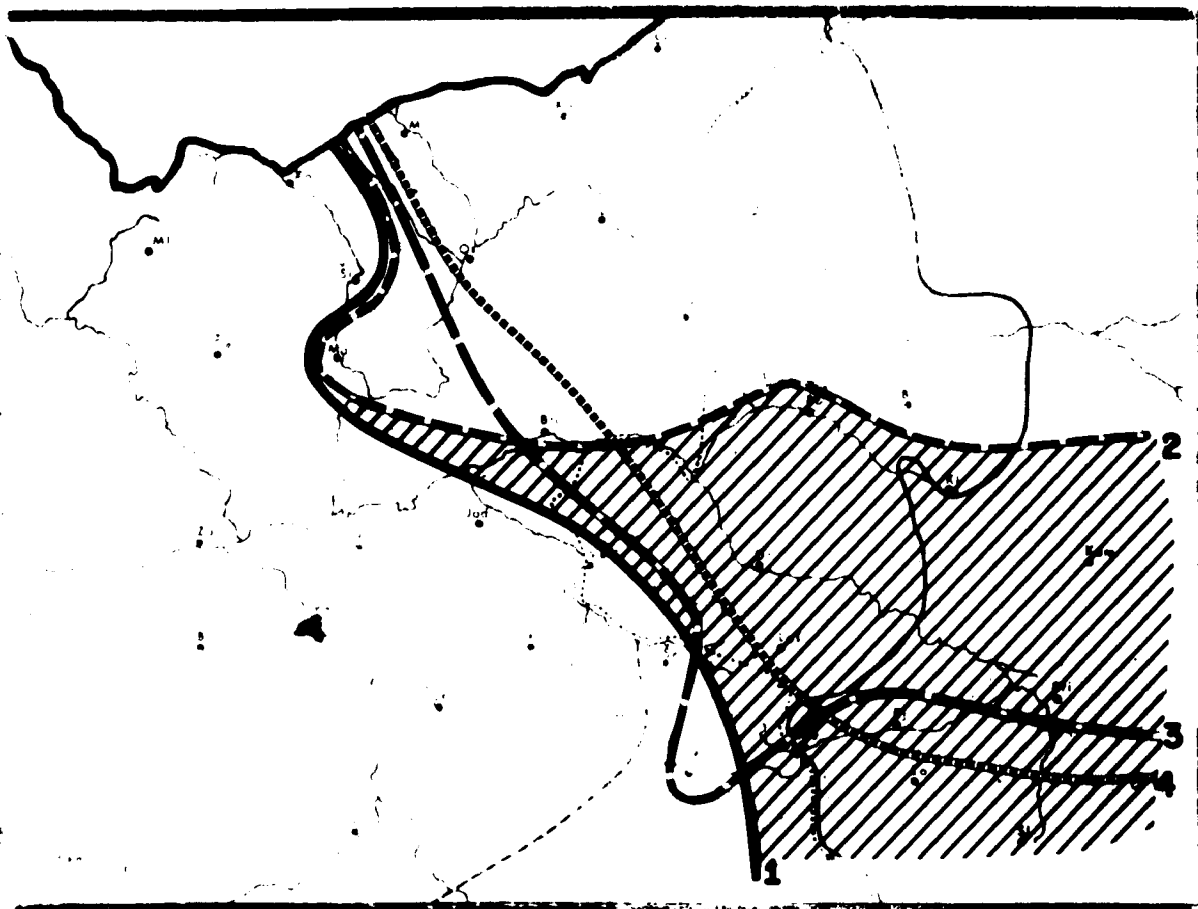
In an overall sense, the greatest consistency is evident in the southeast where both the pronoun system and that of the noun modifiers have been affected. The position of the southeastern area as a recipient of innovations from both CY and NEY is thus cast into sharp relief.

#### 4.3 Diminutives

Standard Yiddish possesses two degrees of diminution. Most stems add -l to form the diminutive, -ele to form the imminutive. Suffixing is accompanied by stem-vowel mutation whenever such mutation occurs elsewhere in the inflectional paradigm of the noun. Thus, kop 'head', kep 'heads'; kepl (dim. sg.), képele (immin. sg.).

In our area regional variation occurs primarily in the case of -l stems (Fig. 4:63). In the east, thematic -l and suffix-initial l- are separated by an intervening x; e.g. majl-x-l 'mouth (dim.)', majl-x-ele (immin.). In the west, however, an epenthetic e has dissolved the cluster -lxl-. In this area, only one degree of diminution could be elicited; e.g. majl-ex-l. The location of the illustrated isogloss bundle is already familiar.





**1. Eastern limit of pronoun differentiation (cf. Fig. 4:41)**

**2. SW limit of dat. - accus. distinctions in the noun modifiers (cf. Fig. 4:42)**

**3. SW limit of article contractions in the intermediate gender (cf. Fig. 4:46)**

**4. SW limit of typical common noun inflections (cf. Figs. 4:52 - 4:55)**

**/// Area of most case syncretism**

**FIG. 4:62 CASE DISTINCTIONS**

There is good reason to suppose that the described phenomenon is a morphological consequence of a phonetic development (cf. §5.28). We have included its description here, however, rather than in Chapter 5, because the variation is completely predictable on a morphological level. This is in contrast to the grammatical consequences of other phonological changes described in Chapter 5 (§§ 5.12.211, 5.14.21).

We have recorded the occurrence of the diminutive suffix -ge in a single northwestern community. In addition to the examples in Fig. 4:63, -ge occurred in two other -l stems as well: gelge 'yolk' and mīlege 'mill (dim.)'. Both the literature<sup>9</sup> and our own investigations in communities in western Poland suggest that the -ge suffix was formerly more widespread. No evidence of [ç] in other contexts has been found in Eastern Yiddish.

#### 4.4 Adjective Inflections

The oblique case morpheme of adjectives modifying masculine nouns is {-n} in Standard Yiddish. After stems with final vowel, diphthong, or [n], the appropriate allomorph is [-em]. Elsewhere it is [-n]. Again in the case of the -l stems we observe regional variation (Fig. 4:64). The distribution of the non-standard [-əm] forms is strikingly similar to the "channels" of Figs. 2:14-2:16.

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<sup>9</sup>Prilutski (1921:323) noted the occurrence of diminutives like [māltjo] 'mouth' and [kāltjo] 'voice' in Mākeve, a community in which we found no remaining evidence of this phenomenon.

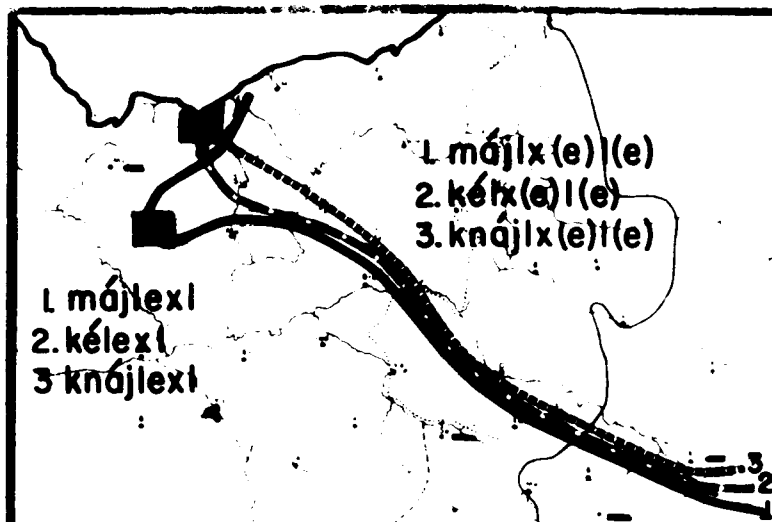


FIG. 4:63 DIMINUTIVES OF -I STEMS



FIG. 4:64 ADJECTIVE INFLECTIONS -I STEMS

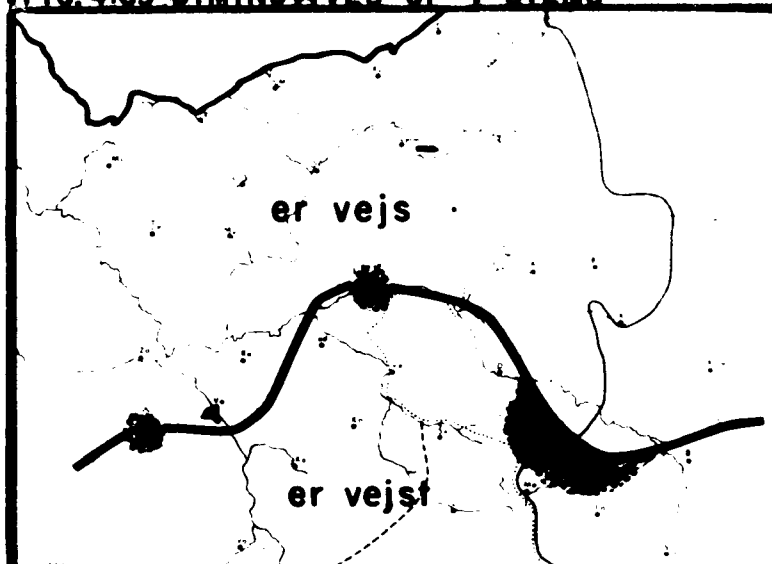


FIG. 4:65 THRD PERSON SINGULAR: -t VS. ZERO

FIG. 4:63

1. 'mouth'

■ both.

2. 'voice'

■ *kelçe*

3. 'ball, clew'

■ *knajlçe*

-not elicited

FIG. 4:64

≡ *éjdel-em*

'polite, civil'

||| *túnkel-em*

'dark'

-not elicited

FIG. 4:65

'he knows'

⊗ -t ~ zero

-not elicited

## 4.5 Verbs

### 4.51 Third Person Singular

We have illustrated a single example of variation in the third person singular of the verb visn 'to know'. Historically, this, like the modals, lacks a suffix in the stated form (er vejs 'he knows'). In Fig. 4:65 we see that while the zero form has been preserved in the north, a -t suffix has been added in the south (er vejst).

### 4.52 Past Participles

In Figs. 4:66-4:48, the historical alternant of the illustrated forms again occurs in the north. In the case of darfn 'to need' (Fig. 4:67), the absence of a Germanic model suggests that the -n participle gedorfn is the innovation. As for the novel vowel in gedarft (cf. Standard German gedurft), it may be reasonably explained as resulting from the lowering of a front vowel (cf. MHG dürfen).<sup>10</sup> Parallel developments are described in §5.13.512.

The innovations are thus all of southern origin.

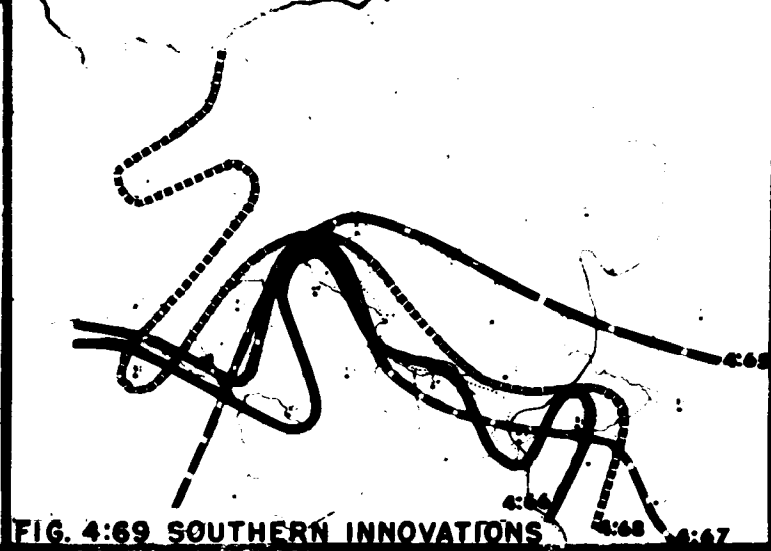
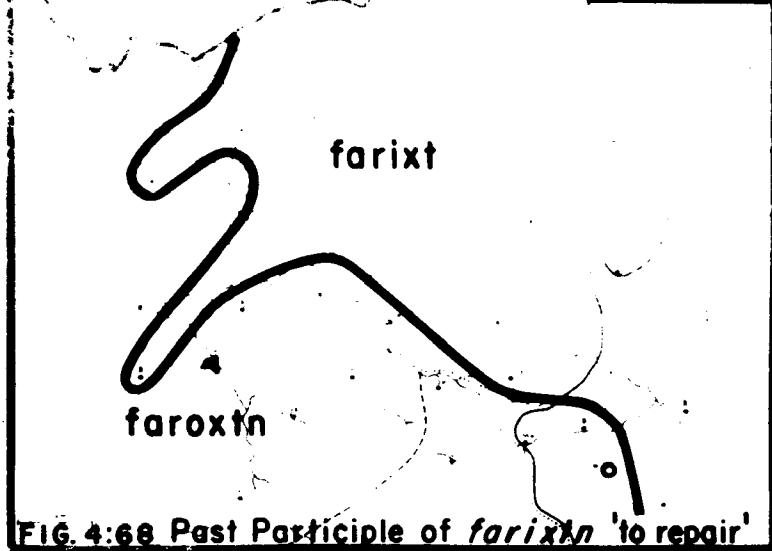
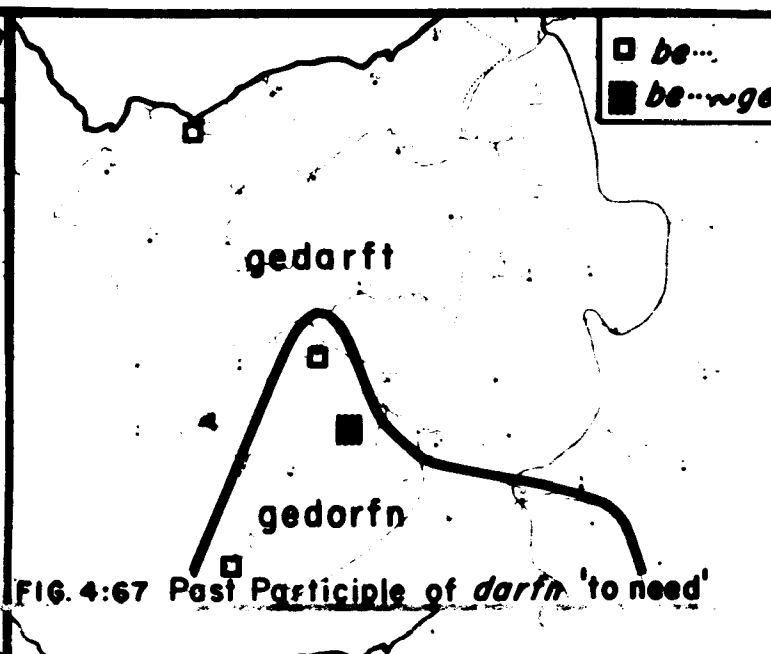
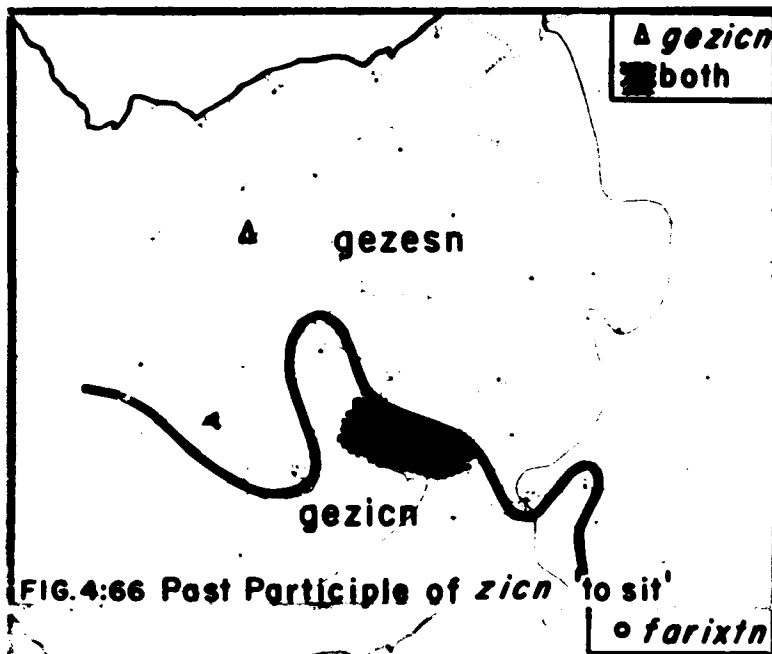
### 4.53 Alternations in Reflexivity

Verbs used reflexively in some areas may occur without a reflexive pronoun in others. Variation in the pronoun employed is irrelevant to the present discussion.

The reflexive form of the verb 'to play' (Fig. 4:70) is almost

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<sup>10</sup> On dialectal German variants of darf with a front vowel cf. Zirmunskij (1962:552).



universal while the reverse is true in the case of 'he studies' (Fig. 4:71). Both 'to rub (one's eye)' (Fig. 4:72) and 'to wash (one's hands)' (Fig. 4:73) occur in their reflexive forms in the south and the west. Note that Figs. 4:74 and 4:75 are virtually mirror images of each other.

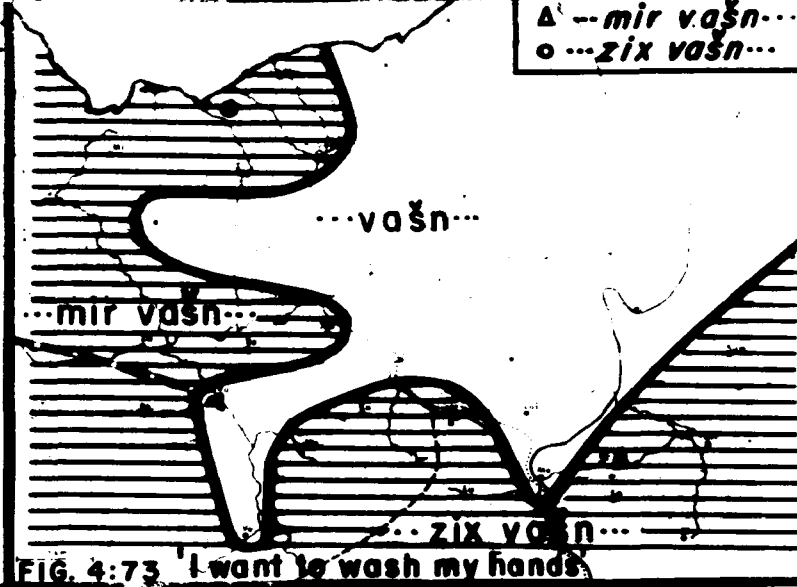
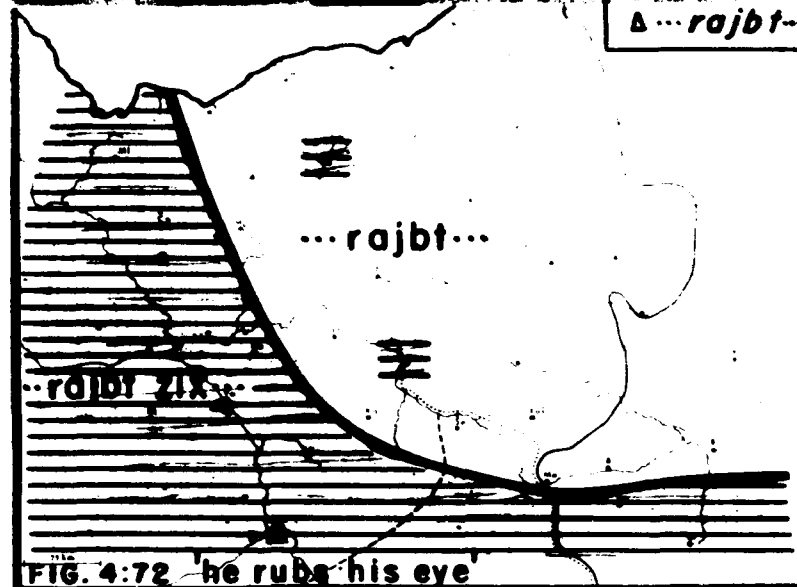
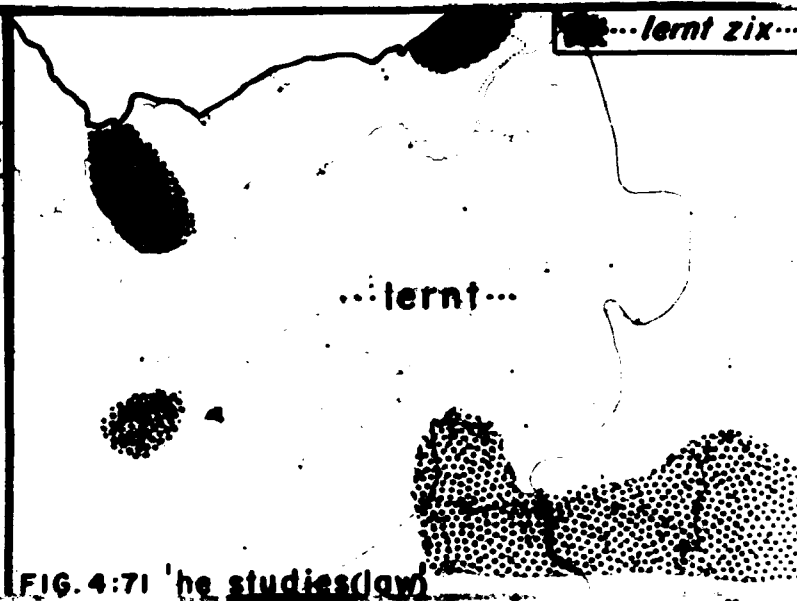
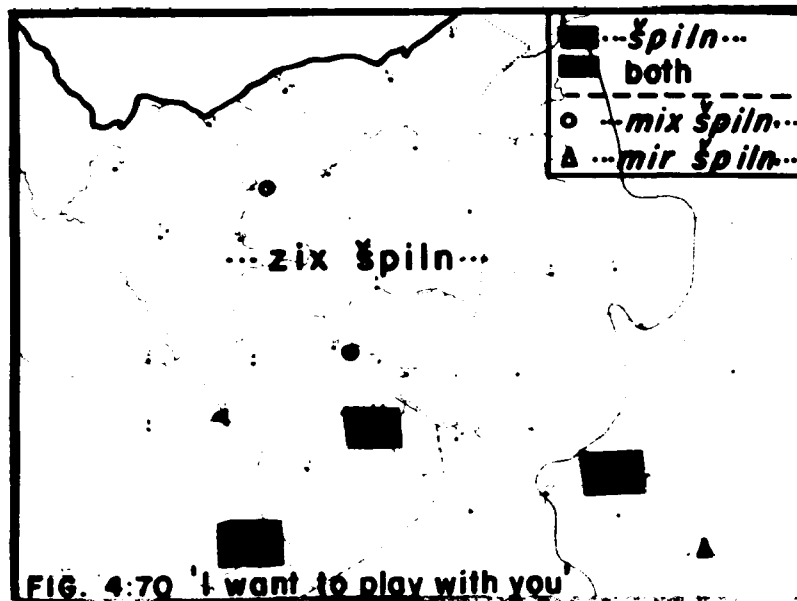
Knowledge of the geography of parallel Slavic variation is too imprecise to permit direct comparison with the Yiddish data; yet there is a marked tendency, particularly in the Belorussian vernacular, to favor reflexive constructions in nearly all of the illustrated contexts, and we might reasonably assume a relationship between the phenomena in both languages.

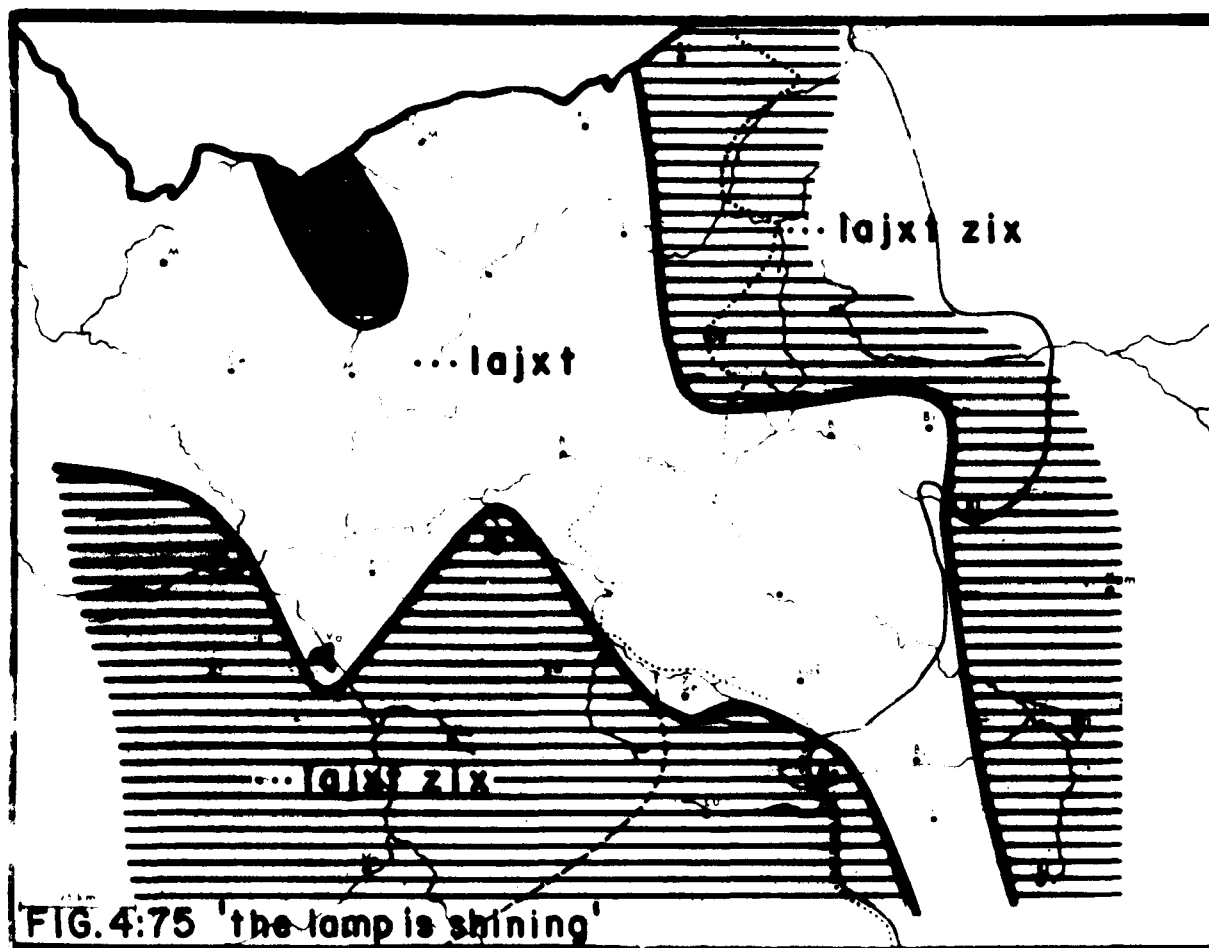
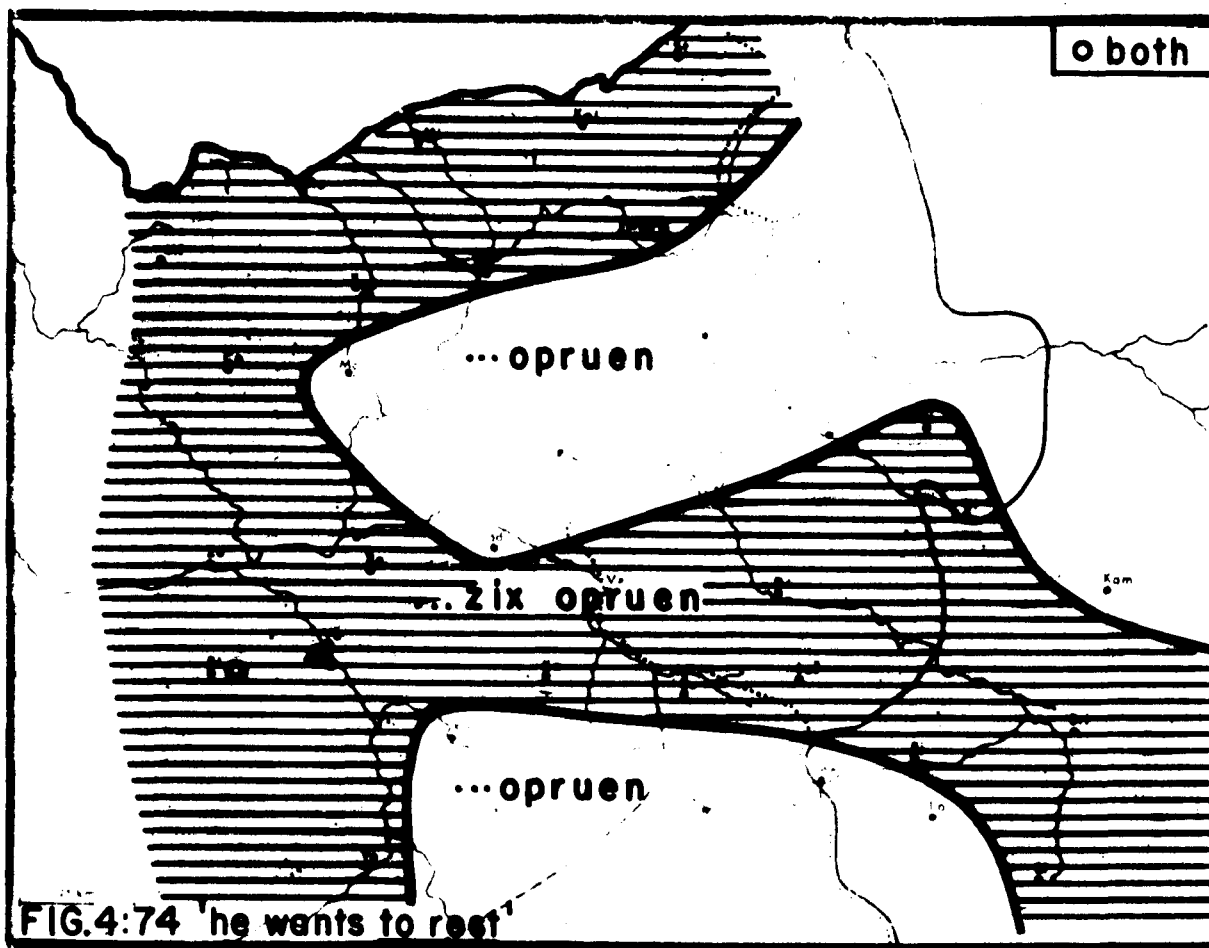
#### 4.54 Verb Auxiliaries

In forming the past tense, Standard Yiddish employs two auxiliaries, hobn 'to have' and zajn 'to be'. The latter is the less frequent and is restricted for the most part to intransitive verbs. It forms constructions roughly comparable to the archaic 'am come' in English. In the east the use of the auxiliary zajn has been almost completely eliminated (Fig. 4:76-4:78).

#### 4.55 Person Endings

The present tense verb endings of Standard Yiddish are illustrated in Table 5.







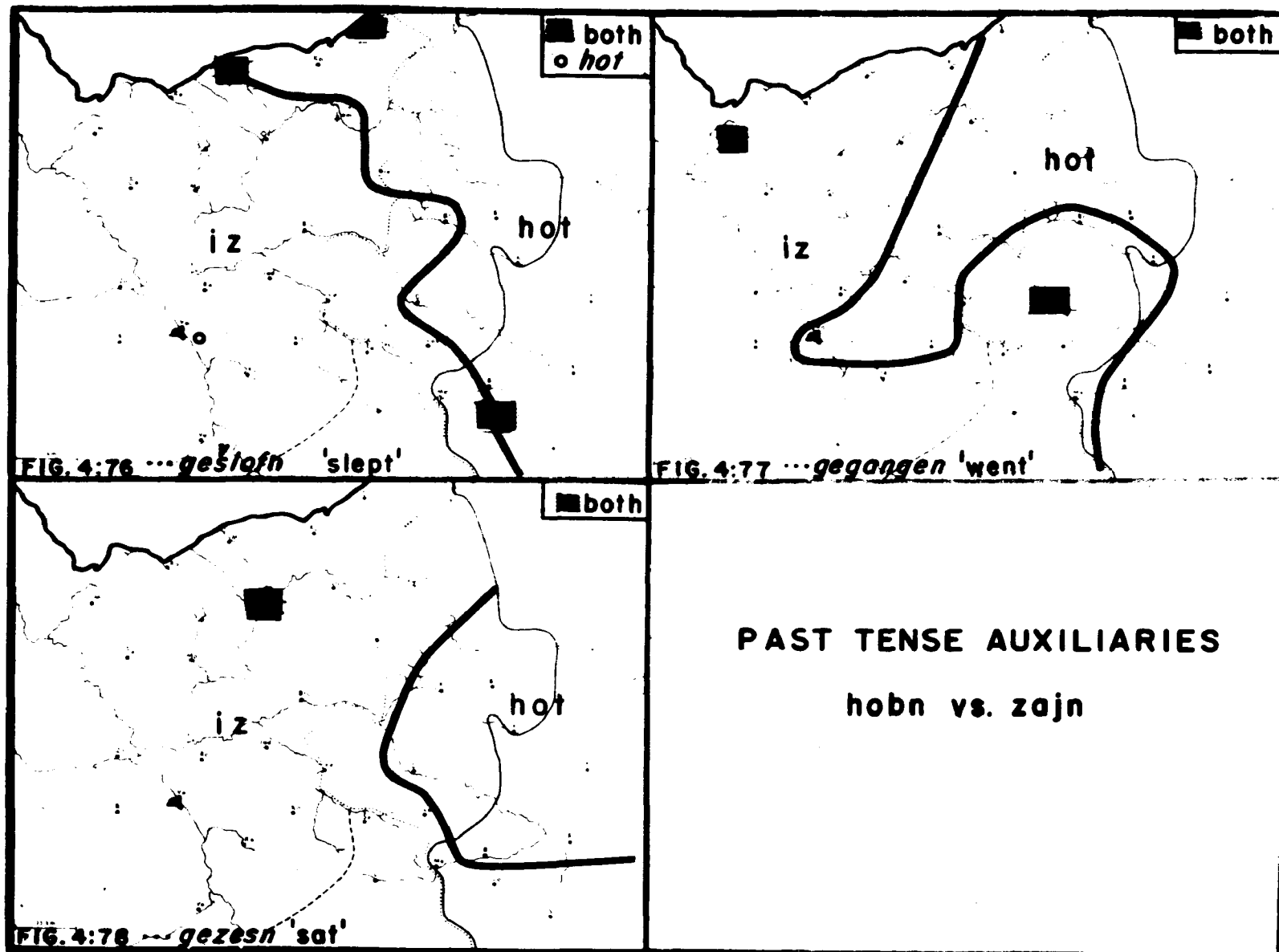


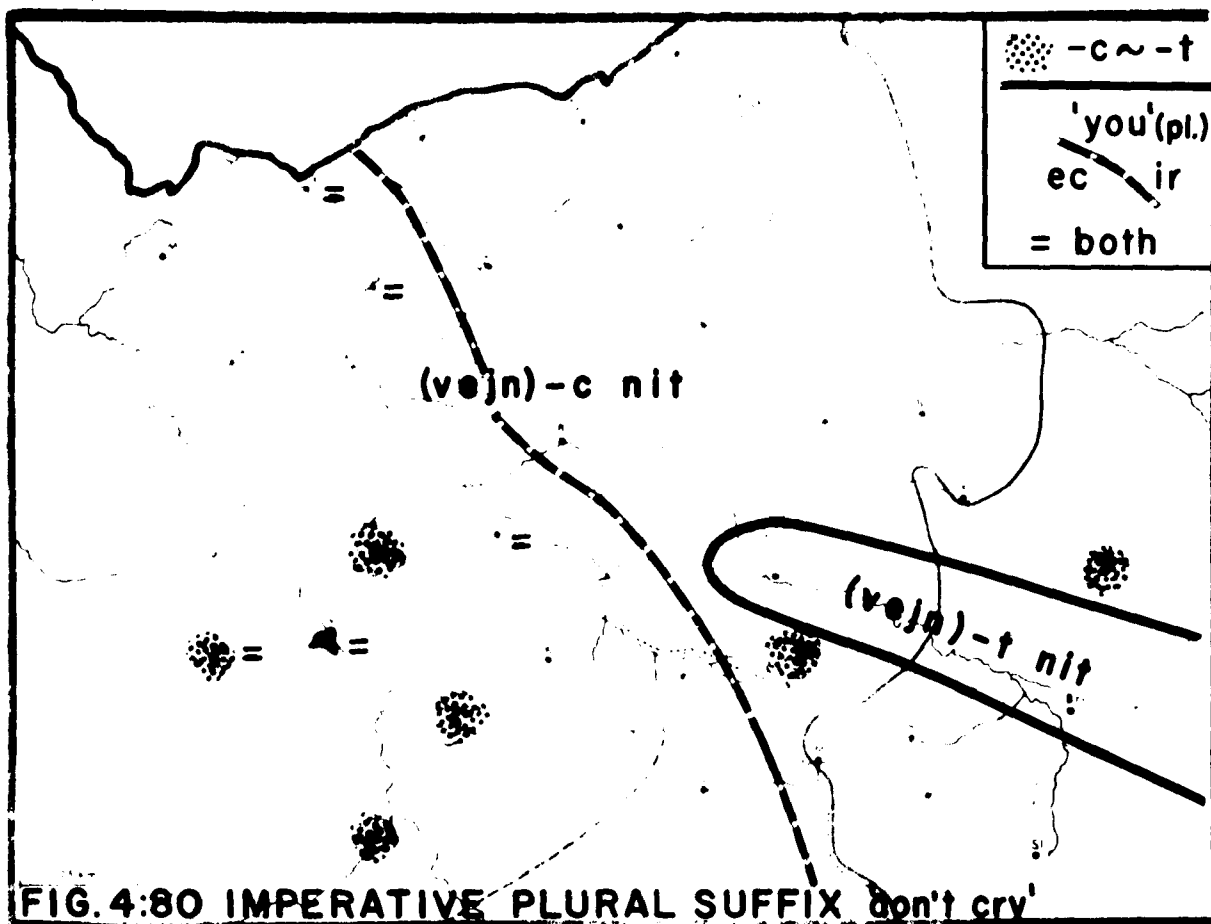
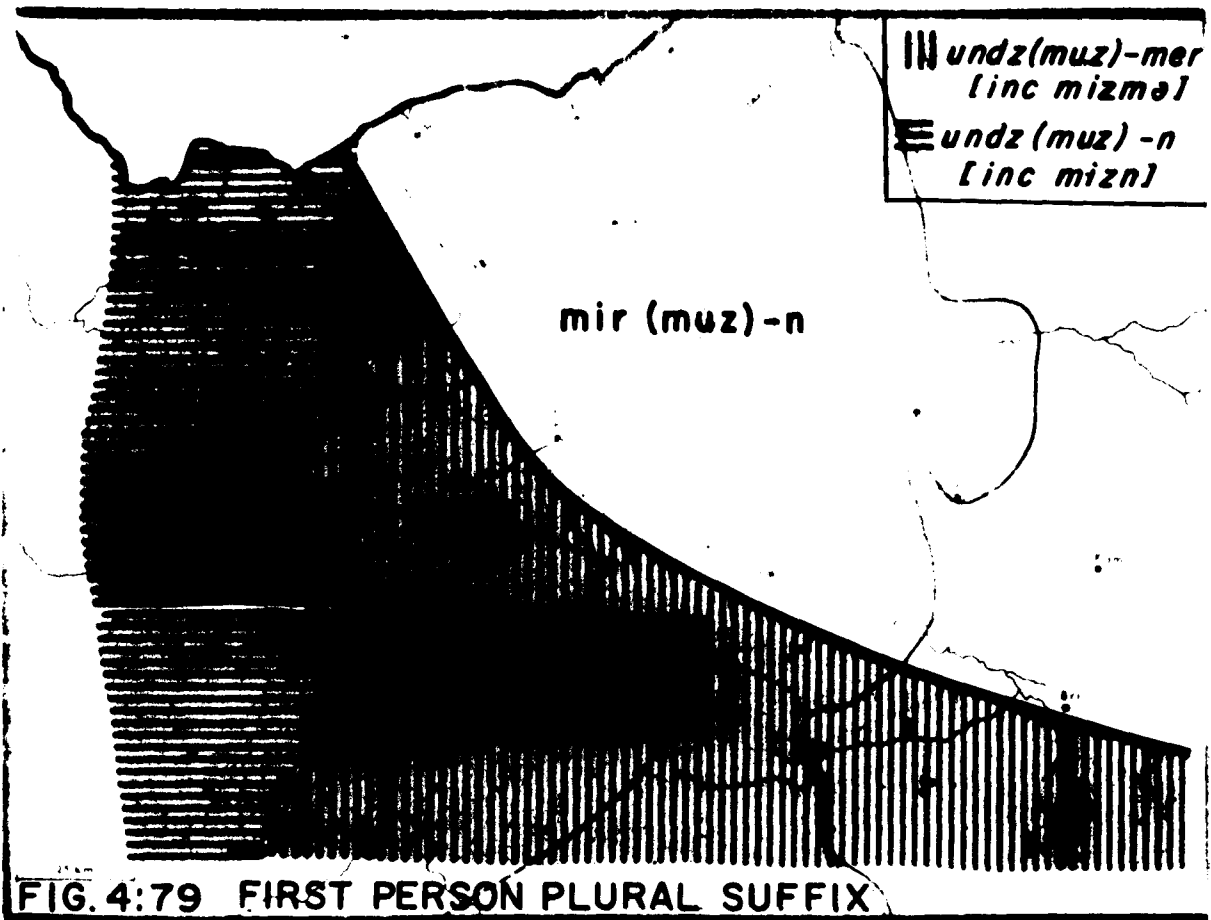
TABLE 5  
PRESENT TENSE VERB ENDINGS IN STANDARD YIDDISH

<u>gejn</u> 'to go'		
	Singular	Plural
1	ix gej - $\emptyset$	mir gej -en
2	du gej - st	ir gej -t
3	er gej - t	zej gej -en
Imp.	gej - $\emptyset$	gej -t

Despite their similarity in the standard language, dialectal variation suggests that we consider separately the suffixes of the first and third persons plural.

In the plural of the first person, the conventional mir (gej)en is universal in the northeast. In the southwest, however, a variety of other forms occur (Fig. 4:79). The most significant for the present discussion is undz (gej) mir [inc...-m<sub>ə</sub>(r)] in which the historically oblique pronoun undz occurs in the nominative and a new suffix -mir [m<sub>ər</sub>] has replaced the usual -en. An associated variant, elsewhere in CY, is mir ...-mir [m<sub>ə</sub>(r) ... m<sub>ə</sub>(r)]. While the enclitic use of mir [m<sub>ər</sub>] < wir is attested in dialectal German, e.g. Southern Austrian wir sogmr 'wir sagen', Kherm<sub>mr</sub> aufn? 'gehören wir hinauf?' (Zirmunskij 1962:525), the origin of the Yiddish construction which employs the oblique pronoun in the nominative remains a mystery.<sup>11</sup> The form undz ...-en appears

<sup>11</sup>The construction mir ...-mir is also suggestive of the Polish sequence of pronoun and homophonous verb suffix my ...-my. It seems unnecessary, however, to posit Polish influence in a case where the Yiddish forms can be explained in terms of the cited Germanic evidence.



to be a compromise between mir ...-en and undz ...-mir.

The distribution of the variants in Fig. 4:79 again suggests the southern origin of the innovation in our territory.

Variation also occurs in the ending of the imperative plural (Fig. 4:80). While apparently related to the pronoun ec 'you (pl.)' which occurs only in the west, the imperative -c has been retained almost universally (cf. also Fig. 3:14).

#### 4.6 Noun Plurals

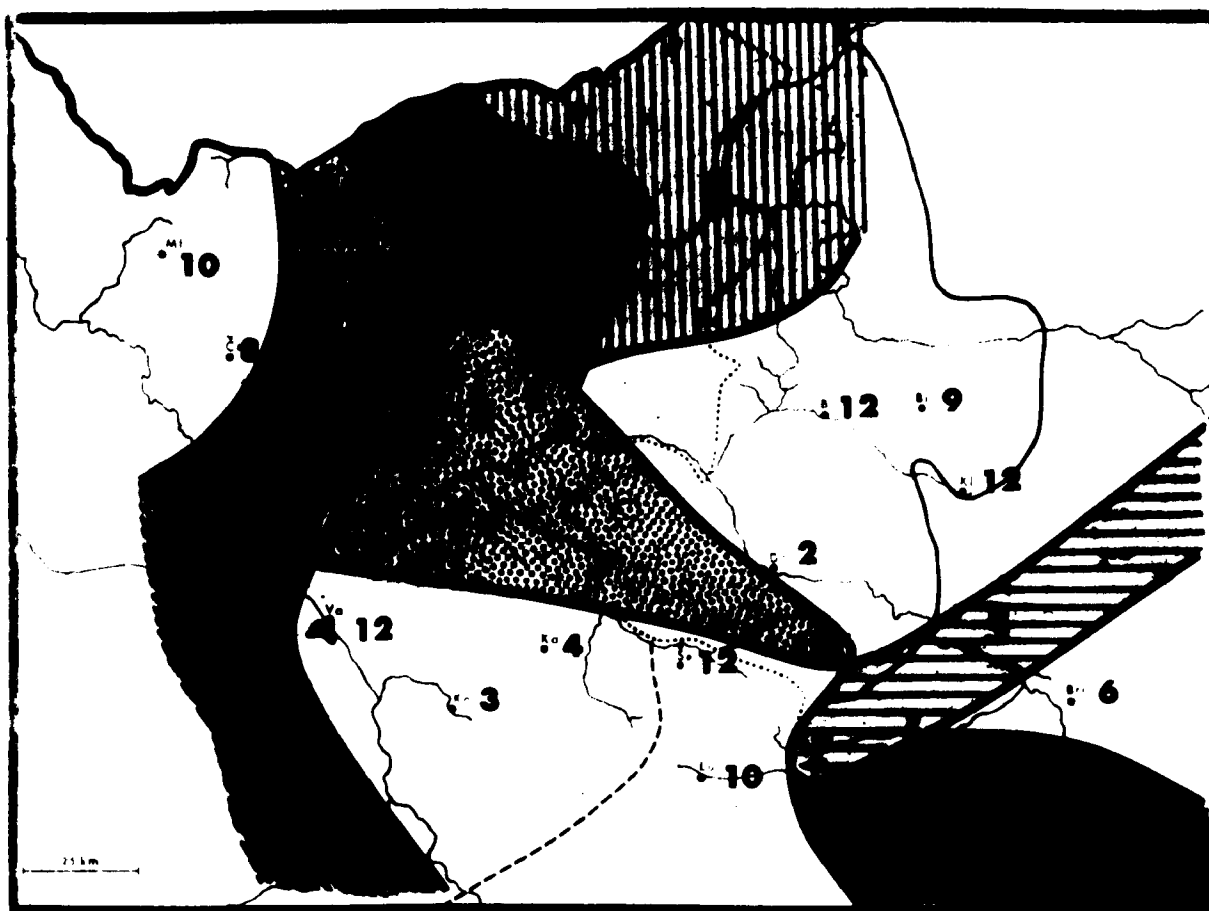
From the point of view of its geographic relevance, noun plural formation in Yiddish must be considered a residual category. Devices for forming the plural of nouns are among the most varied in the language. Standard Yiddish sometimes utilizes alternate plural forms for semantic purposes,<sup>12</sup> but it is virtually certain, as suggested by Reyzen (1926:395), that the formal differences, without corresponding semantic distinctions, are dialectal in origin. Yet efforts to identify particular plural types as characteristic of one region or another fail at almost every turn. We offer two more or less positive examples:

The words glok 'bell', cung 'tongue', and štal 'stable', form their plurals by adding either -(e)n or -er; vowel mutation may accompany the suffixation, e.g. glokn/gleker, cungen ~ cingen/cinger, štaln/šteler.

Fig. 4:81 delimits areas in terms of the various plural types which they

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<sup>12</sup>"The [Slavic] languages in which substantives (generally masculine) systematically distinguish in the plural between neutral vs. expressive-pejorative forms, are Polish, Bulgarian, and to some extent Macedonian" (Stankiewicz 1962:18).



	<i>glok</i> 'bell'	<i>cung</i> 'tongue'	<i>stal</i> 'stable'
1.	-n	-en	-n
2.	-n	-en	-er
3.	-n~-er	-er	-n
4.	-n~-er	-er	-n~-er
5.	-n	-er	-er
6.	-n	-en~-er	-er
7.	-n	-er	-n
8.	-er	-er	-n
9.	-er	-en	-n~-er
10.	-er	-en	-er
11.	-er	-en	-n
12.	-er	-er	-er

FIG. 4:81 -(e)n vs. -er Plurals

display in these words. In one contiguous area, all occur with the -(e)n suffix. In three scattered communities, all plurals have -er. Elsewhere a variety of combinations occur. The geographic clustering of these combinations indicate, of course, that few of them are simply random.

A second phenomenon reveals somewhat greater systematicity. One of a variety of plurals common to -n stems is the suffix -es. These are clearly innovations, in some cases rather sporadic in occurrence, but in all confined to the south and west (Fig. 4:82).<sup>13</sup>

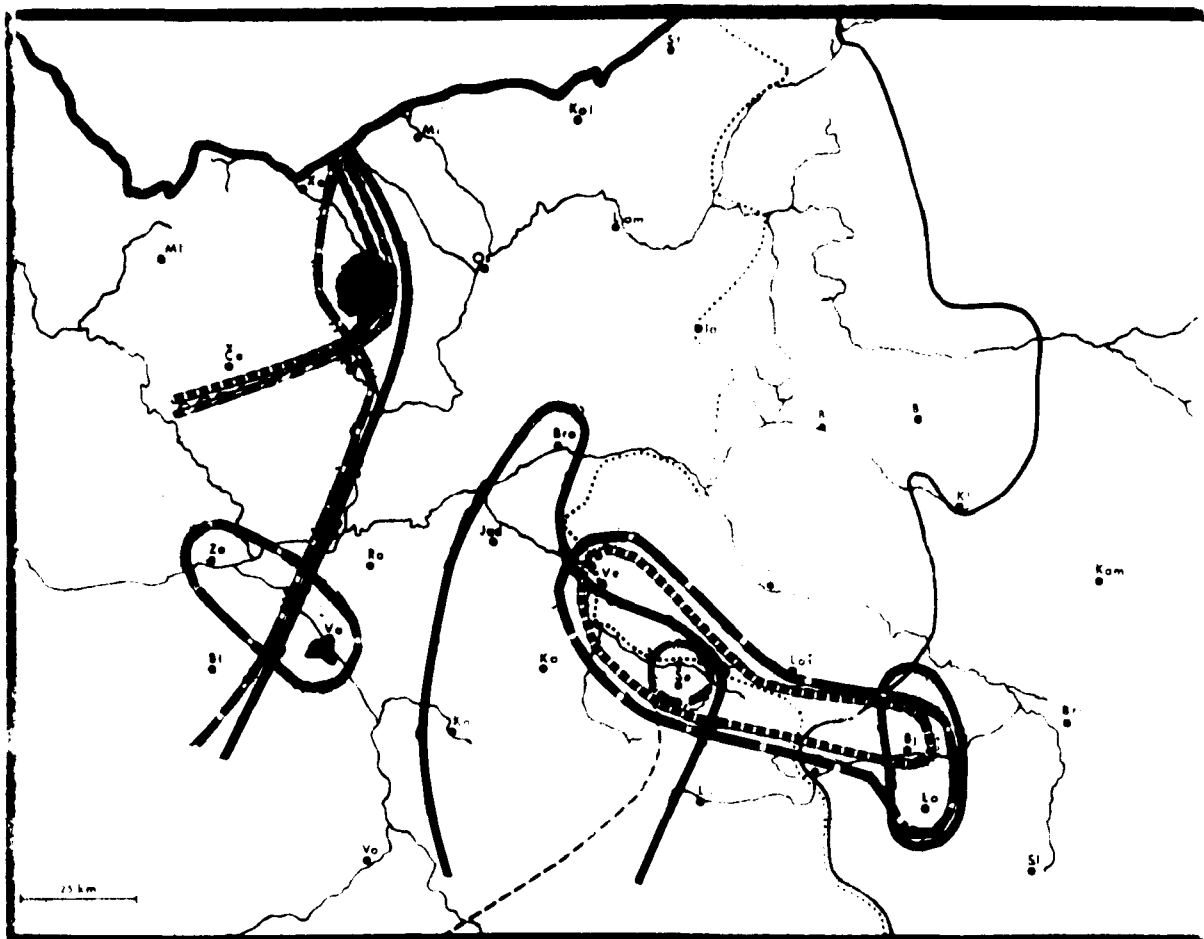
While we have found a structural approach to the problem of noun plurals to be on the whole unproductive,<sup>14</sup> treatment in terms of geographic patterns alone has yielded more significant results.

A variety of familiar distributions emerge when individual plural alternations are considered. (North)eastern nezer 'noses' is distinct from (south)western nez [nejz] (Fig. 4:83).<sup>15</sup> The plural šteler 'stables', as distinct from štaln, is a specialty of the southeast (Fig. 4:84). The northwest is distinguished by čveker 'nails', as opposed to čvekes (Fig. 4:85), while parkánes 'fences'

<sup>13</sup> Though probably of Hebrew-Aramaic origin, the -es plural in Yiddish is the one most frequently reserved for nouns of Slavic origin (cf. U. Weinreich 1958a:391).

<sup>14</sup> Exceptional is only the fact of plural innovation attributable to phonological change. These developments are considered separately below in §§5.12.211, 5.14.21. The fact of innovation in the case of the -n stems, described above, may also be attributed in large measure to the reinterpretation of the Germanic -n plural as a mark of the singular. In the first instance this may have been associated with the apocope of unstressed final [-ə] in Yiddish substantives (and verb forms) of Germanic origin.

<sup>15</sup> For a separate treatment of the linguistic and historical significance of the plural forms of noz see U. Weinreich (1960).



- |       |                 |            |
|-------|-----------------|------------|
| ----- | <i>kójmenes</i> | 'chimneys' |
| ———   | <i>bójdemes</i> | 'attics'   |
| ———   | <i>kíšenes</i>  | 'cushions' |
| ----- | <i>lódenes</i>  | 'shutters' |
| ———   | <i>vólkenes</i> | 'clouds'   |
| ●●●●● | <i>mógenes</i>  | 'stomach'  |

FIG. 4:82 -es plurals of n-stems





as opposed to párkenes, parkns,<sup>16</sup> etc. (Fig. 4:86), is confined to the northeastern corner.

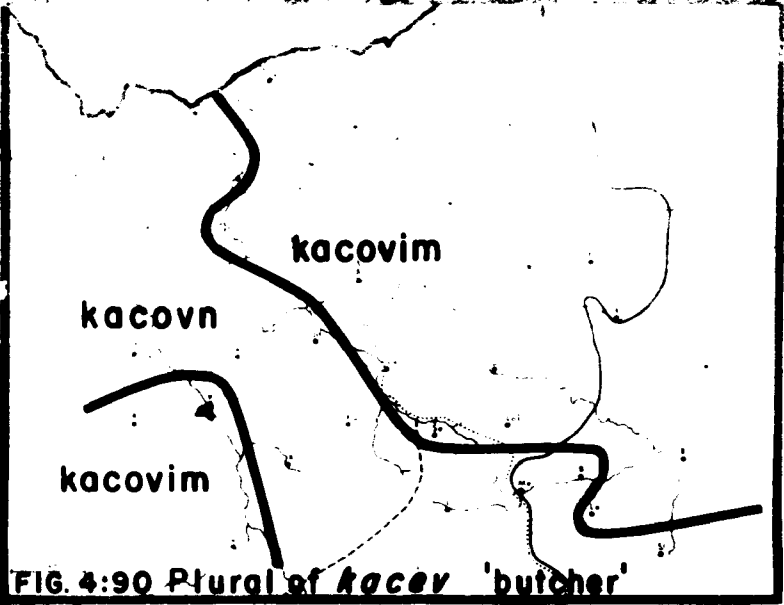
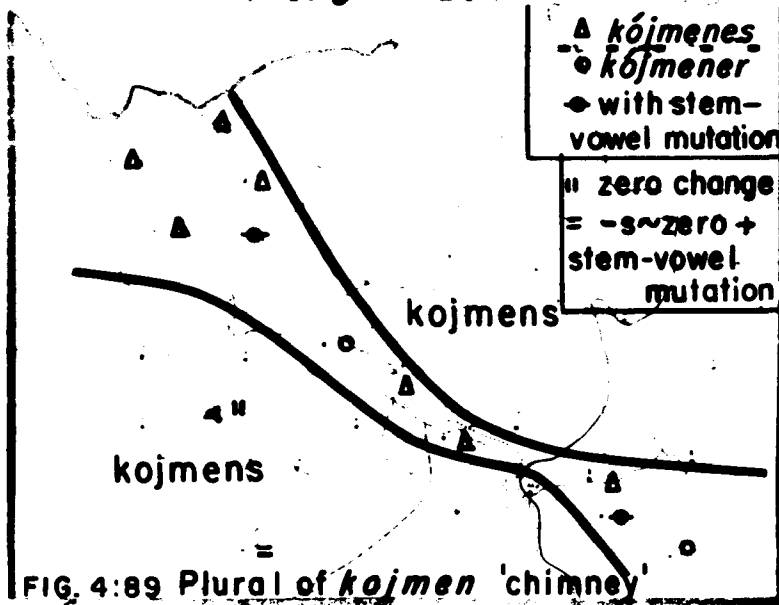
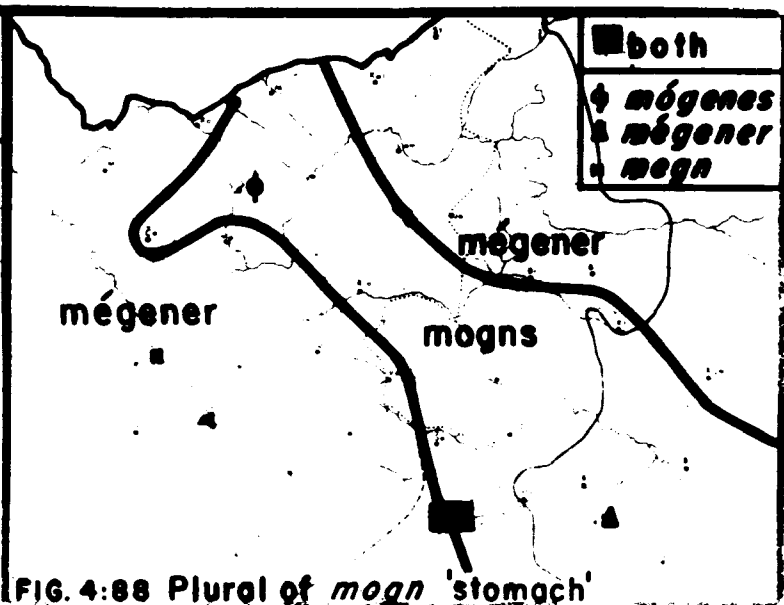
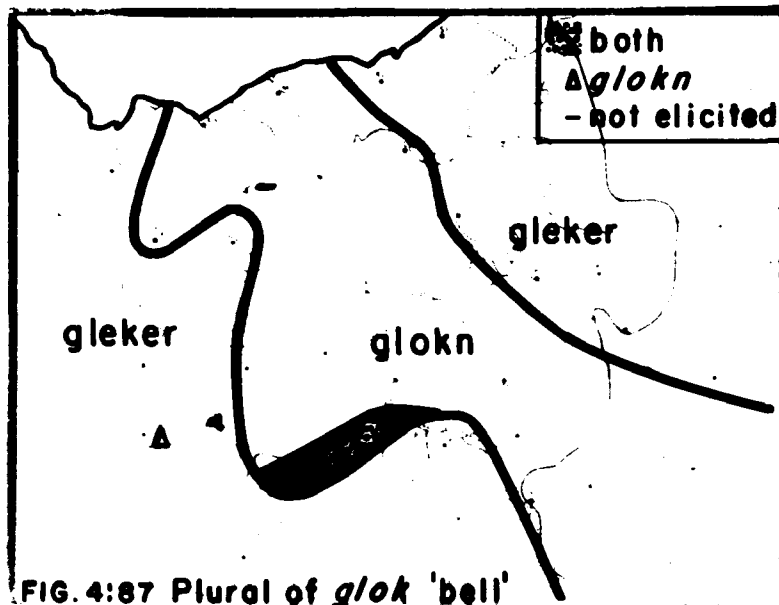
Still somewhat new is the pattern of Figs. 4:87-4:89. From attested Germanic evidence there can be little doubt that the plurals gleker 'bells' (Fig. 4:87) and mégener 'stomachs' (Fig. 4:88) are innovations in Yiddish. Yet their distribution is discontinuous, and the forms that intervene (glokn, mogns) must be of even more recent provenience.<sup>17</sup> If we consider together both intrusive innovations in Fig. 4:89 (kójmenes, kójmener 'chimneys') the illustrated distribution is no different than the preceding ones. From a historical point of view there is no question of the novelty of the form kacovn 'butchers' (Fig. 4:90) which intrudes in the same fashion between two areas where kacovim is preserved (cf. HA kasavim).

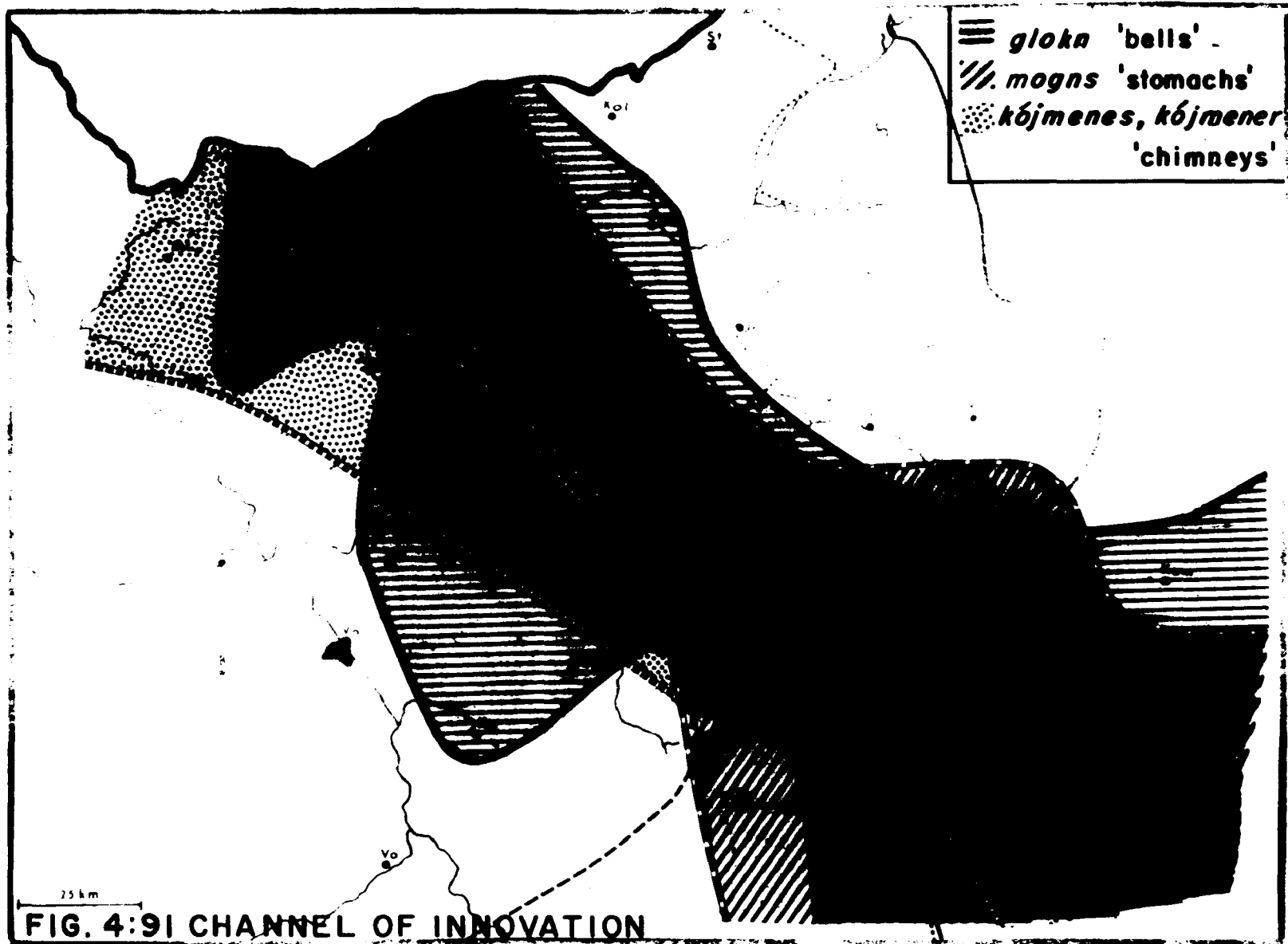
The diagonal swath which these innovations cut out of an otherwise near-uniform area (Fig. 4:91) parallels a similar phenomenon encountered in our discussion of gender variation and elsewhere (cf. Figs. 4:20, 4:28, 4:75). In contrast to many of the innovations in gender, however, there seems to be no uniform structural factor that can be advanced to account for the innovations in the noun plurals. We will return to the problem in Chapter 6.

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<sup>16</sup>The multiple origins of the Yiddish -s plural is discussed at some length by M. Weinreich (1956b:418ff.).

<sup>17</sup>The unexplored state of Old Yiddish evidence, and the complex development of words like MHG mage 'stomach', whose weak plurals were reinterpreted as singulars on the model of unmarked strong plurals in -en or -el (Curme 1922:80, 84), makes it difficult to determine which of the various Yiddish alternants is, in fact, the oldest.





## CHAPTER 5

## PHONOLOGY

5.0 Plan of the Chapter

We now turn to an analysis of that part of the language in which the structure itself may, a priori, be expected to play the strongest part in determining the history of innovations. The Yiddish dialects under investigation are characterized by such a multiplicity of phonological differences that it is hardly surprising that isoglosses were first noted in this linguistic domain (§1.3) and that the geographic region in question served so readily as a sample transition area.

We begin with the system of stressed vowels, where the most striking and, historically, most revealing differences lie (§5.1). In this section we have been less selective in the presentation of our data than was the case in earlier chapters--this in order to counter the tendency prevalent in earlier ~~Yiddish~~ linguistic descriptions to ignore the exceptions that cast doubt upon the efficacy of illusory sound laws. Rather than oversimplify the facts by including only those items that permit sweeping generalizations, we have included all of our material hoping thereby to achieve a more realistic understanding of the history of the language.

We conclude the chapter with a brief consideration of consonantal variation (§5.2) which, no less characteristic of specific

areas than vocalic differences, is nevertheless relatively minor.

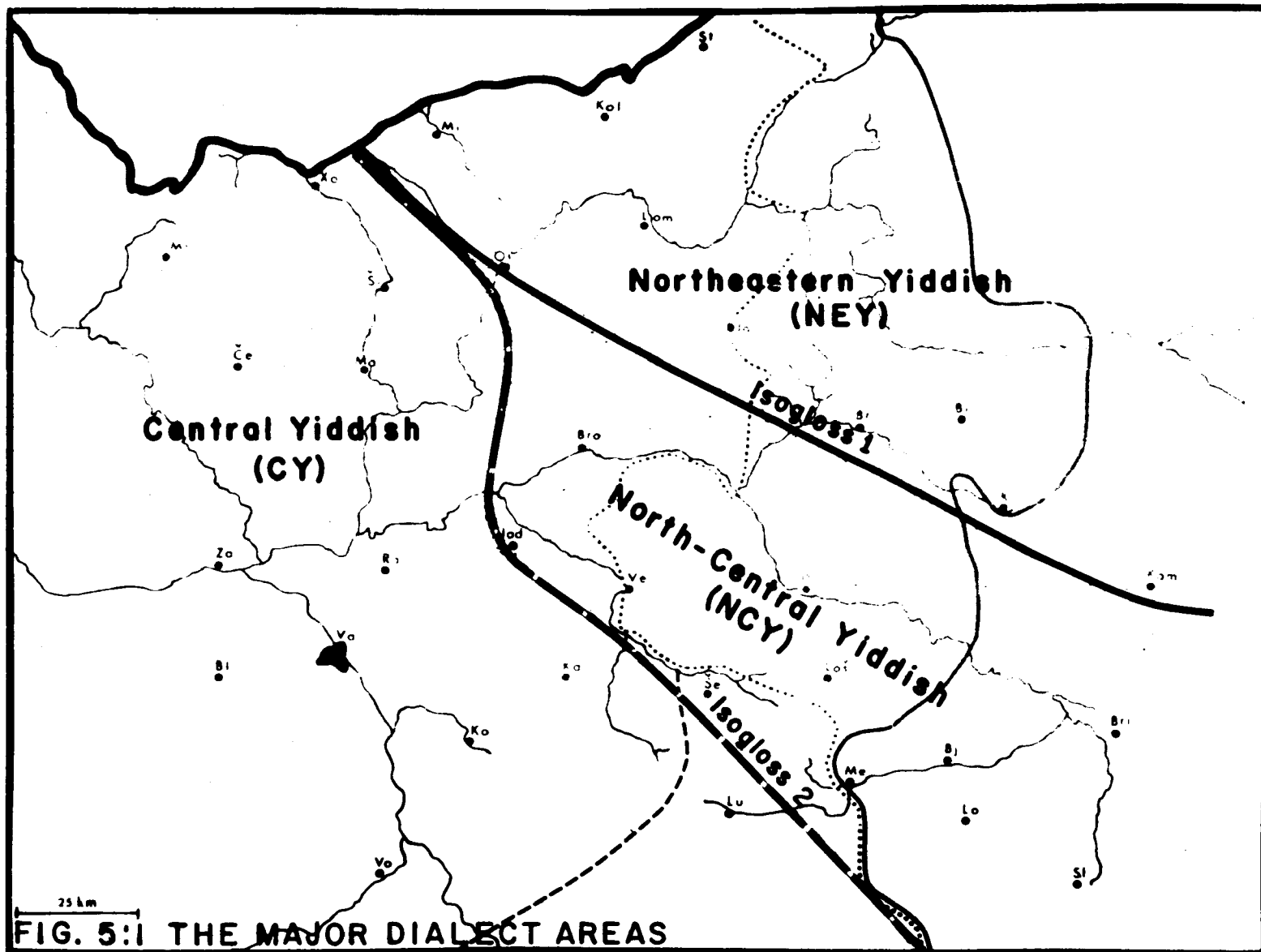
### 5.1 Vocalism

The area under study is divided roughly into three parts by Isoglosses 1 and 2 (Fig. 5:1). In the extreme west we find the system known in the literature as Central Yiddish (CY); in the east--the Northeastern Yiddish (NEY) system. Both are well known to Yiddish dialectologists.

Between CY and NEY lies an area characterized by a considerable number of transition phenomena whose distribution has been delimited by the present investigation. As an ad hoc designation for this area we propose the term North-Central Yiddish (NCY).

Implicit in Uriel Weinreich's method of describing the etymological relations of phonemes in the Yiddish dialects (1958b) is the proof that it is possible to reconstruct a proto-dialect which would be the common ancestor of CY and NEY. We will show, however, that it is not possible to derive the varieties of NCY from the same proto-dialect by the comparative-reconstructive method. Consequently we will have to account for their development by a "wave-theory" model.

Following the procedure employed by U. Weinreich (ibid.), itself patterned on Haudricourt and Juilland (1949), we use phonetic letter symbols to suggest the value of phonemes, and subscript numbers to identify their historical origin. Thus we are able to say that CY  $\bar{a}_{34}$  corresponds historically to NEY  $a_{34}$ , but synchronically to Western Yiddish (WY)  $\bar{a}_{44}$ . This numbering system



is a modification of the one employed by M. Weinreich (1960).<sup>1</sup>

Taking the subscript numbers as our point of departure we might exemplify the differences between the two dialects as follows:

<u>Vowel</u>	<u>CY</u>	<u>NEY</u>	
11	[šābəs]	[šabəs]	'sabbath'
12, 13 {	[zūgn]	[zogn]	'to say'
	[rūf]	[rov]	'Rabbi'
21	[bet]	[bet]	'bed'
22,23,24	[gaj̄n]	[gejn]	'to go'
25	[bej̄tn]	[betn]	'to request'
31	[bīn]	[bin]	'(I) am'
32,33	[tīf]	[tif]	'deep'
34	[vān]	[vaj̄n]	'wine'
41	[kōl]	[kol]	'voice'
42,43,44	[hoj̄zn]	[hejzn]	'trousers'
51	[fīn]	[fun]	'of'
52,53	[hīn]	[hun]	'chicken'
54	[hōt]	[hojt]	'skin'

---

<sup>1</sup>Two digits accompany each letter symbol. The first of these, 1-5, shows whether the quality of the Proto-Yiddish (PY) sound was a, e, i, o, u, respectively; the significance of the second digit is as follows: 1, originally a short monophthong; 2, originally a long monophthong; 3, an original short monophthong (in open syllable) subjected to early lengthening; 4, the nucleus of an original diphthong; 5, (in the e-series only)--a vowel (apparently a close e [e̞]) with special distribution.

It is apparent that these numbers, attached to a letter symbol, obviate the need for additional diacritics. We have nevertheless employed occasional redundant designations like PEY u 52, Š 11, etc., in order to facilitate the reader's task in following the code.

We have juxtaposed the CY and NEY systems in Table 6.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE 6

## STRESSED VOWEL SYSTEMS OF CY AND NEY

<u>Central Yiddish</u>			
ī <sub>32 33</sub> 52 53	ȳ <sub>31 51</sub>	ū <sub>12 13</sub>	ū <sub>12 13</sub>
ej <sub>25</sub>	e <sub>21</sub>	ö <sub>41</sub>	ō (ou) <sub>54</sub>
		ǣ <sub>11</sub>	
		ā <sub>34</sub>	
	aj <sub>22 23 24</sub>		oj <sub>42 43 44</sub>
<u>Northeastern Yiddish</u>			
i <sub>31 32 33</sub>		u <sub>51 52 53</sub>	
e <sub>21 25</sub>		o <sub>12 13 41</sub>	
		a <sub>11</sub>	
ej ( <del>ay</del> ) <sub>22 23 24</sub> 42 43 44	aj <sub>34</sub>	oj (ou, au) <sub>54</sub>	

We observe from the foregoing that there is no synchronic justification for distinguishing vowels of the O2 and O3 series and

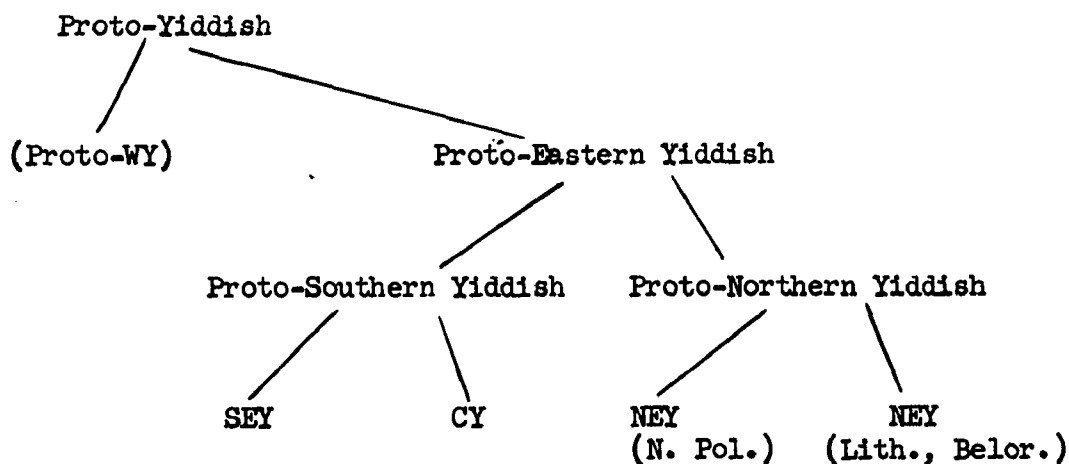
<sup>2</sup>In symbolizing the Yiddish diphthongs, we have represented the front offglide as [j] but the back offglide as [u]. This inconsistency is motivated by the desire to avoid introducing the symbol [w] which, in contrast to [j], has no independent status in the language. Symbols enclosed in parentheses are attested sub-regional variants of the vowels they follow.



henceforth references to 12, 22 etc. should be understood to comprehend, respectively, 13, 23 and so forth. Similarly 22 and 24 on the one hand, and 42 and 44 on the other, will be designated simply as 22 and 42, respectively.

### 5.10 Reconstruction

It would be both uneconomical and methodologically unsound to attempt a reconstruction from the two described varieties of Yiddish alone, especially since they are more innovating than certain other attested varieties. We are obliged to take into account some of the known dialectal phenomena that lie beyond our area and to view the minimal history of the language as including the following stages:



5.10.1 Proto-SY. By comparing the present-day varieties of SY we arrive at the reconstruction of their proto-forms illustrated in Table 7.

TABLE 7  
STRESSED VOWEL SYSTEM OF PSY

---

$\bar{i}_{32 \ 52}$	$\bar{y}_{31 \ 51}$	$\bar{u}_{12}$
$\bar{e}_{25}$	$\bar{e}_{21}$	$\bar{o}_{41}$
		$ou_{54}$
	$\bar{a}_{11}$	
	$\bar{a}_{34}$	
$ej_{22}$		$oj_{42}$

---

The following changes in the reconstructed system yield the present-day forms of CY:

- i) lowering of 22:  $\underline{ej} > \underline{aj}$ ;
- ii) diphthongization of 25:  $\bar{e} > \underline{ej}$ ;
- iii) splitting of 12:  $\bar{u} > \underline{ü/u}$ ;
- iv) (regional) monophthongization of 54:  $\underline{ou} > \bar{o}$ .

5.10.2 Proto-NEY. The proto-dialect that emerges from the varieties of NEY is described in Table 8. <sup>2a</sup>

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<sup>2a</sup> In Table 8 we have posited a front rounded diphthong  $\underline{py}_{42}$  in PNEY despite the absence of other front rounded vowels. We have done so only in order to account for the present-day occurrence of  $\underline{py}_{42}$  in a sub-region of NEY (Courland). To have assumed PNEY  $\underline{oj}_{42}$  rather than  $[\underline{py}]$  would have simplified a good part of the subsequent development; yet it would have required that we posit a more recent sub-regional fronting-rounding of  $[oj]$  to  $[\underline{py}]$  in NEY, an unlikely sound change given the absence of distinctive front rounding elsewhere in the vowel system. If it could be shown, however, that present-day  $[\underline{py}]$  in NEY arose under the influence of dialectal German in Latvia, the simpler view suggested above would be preferable.

TABLE 8  
STRESSED VOWEL SYSTEM OF PNEY

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---

$\bar{\text{i}}_{32}$	$\bar{\text{y}}_{31}$	$\bar{\text{u}}_{51}$	$\bar{\text{u}}_{52}$
$\bar{\text{e}}_{25}$	$\bar{\text{e}}_{21}$	$\bar{\text{y}}_{42}$	$\bar{\text{o}}_{41}$
		$\bar{\text{o}}_{12}$	
		$\text{a}_{11}$	
$\text{ej}_{22}$		$\text{aj}_{34}$	$\text{au}_{54}^3$

---

Four changes are also required for the derivation of present day NEY in our area:

- i) loss of length;
- ii) (regional) unrounding of 42:  $\bar{\text{y}} > \text{ej}$ ;
- iii) (regional) raising of 54:  $\text{au} > \text{ou}$ ;
- iv) (regional) half-fronting of 54:  $\text{ou} > \text{oj}$ .

A comparison of the reconstruction summarized in Table 8 with that of PSY (Table 7) permits us to go back further to a Proto-Eastern Yiddish (PEY) which, in fact, turns out to be identical with PNEY.

This is hardly the place to consider the facts of WY but it

---

<sup>3</sup>It is simpler by far to consider [au] rather than [ou] the proto form of vowel 54 in view of such sub-regional NEY forms as zaver 'sour', gedavern 'to endure' and the rare Belorussian Yiddish variant dojnen 'to pray' of the otherwise universal dáv(e)nen (cf. U. Weinreich 1958b:243, fn. 16).

is apparent that our point of departure, the vowel phonemes of PY, as represented by the paired digits alone, is a reconstruction from a comparison of PWY with PEY (= PNEY). We forego the proof here and assume this as given.

#### 5.11 The Development of Proto-EY.

In order to derive PEY from PY we must posit the following changes:

1) Diphthongization:

a) 42:  $\bar{o} > \underline{ou}$  and merges with  $\underline{ou}_{44}$ ;

b) 22:  $\bar{e} > \underline{ej}$  and merges with  $\underline{ej}_{24}$ ;

ii) Half-lowering:

a) 54:  $\underline{uu} > \underline{au}$ ,

b) 34:  $\underline{ij} > \underline{aj}$ ;

iii) Raising of vowel 12:  $\bar{a} > \bar{o}$ ; <sup>4</sup>

iv) Fronting of vowel 42 (cf. i above):  $\underline{ou} > \underline{oy}$ .

Among these changes it may only be necessary to assume that ia) preceded iii) and iv). Otherwise it is easy to understand why the contrast between the diphthongal quality of the high sequences PY  $\underline{ij}_{34}$  and  $\underline{uu}_{54}$  (ii above) and the length feature of the high monophthongs PY  $\bar{i}_{32}$  and  $\bar{u}_{52}$  had to be subjected to an early increase. Subsequently, the resulting [aj] and [au], themselves potential candi-

---

<sup>4</sup>The evidence which Joffe produces (1954) in support of his contention that vowel 13 remained [ǣ] or perhaps [ā] long after vowel 12 had become [ō], is geographically too heterogeneous to permit its application to EY. To cite WY texts in evidence of the EY development is to imply fallaciously the derivation of the latter from the former. It is true, of course, that vowel 13 remained [ǣ] in WY but, while this may require that 12 and 13 be kept apart in the reconstruction of PY, we can readily assume their merger from the point of view of EY.

dates for monophthongization, spurred the change of [ā] to [ō] (111). The new [ō] in turn, increased the pressure on the heavily taxed back area which was then relieved by the palatalization of [ou] (1v).

Given now the identity of PEY and PNEY we may view the emergence of the present-day dialects in terms of three major developments: the initial differentiation of PSY from P(N)EY (§5.12); further innovations in SY invading our area from the southwest (§5.13); further innovations in NEY, invading our area from the northeast (§5.14).

#### 5.12 Differentiation of PSY from P(N)EY

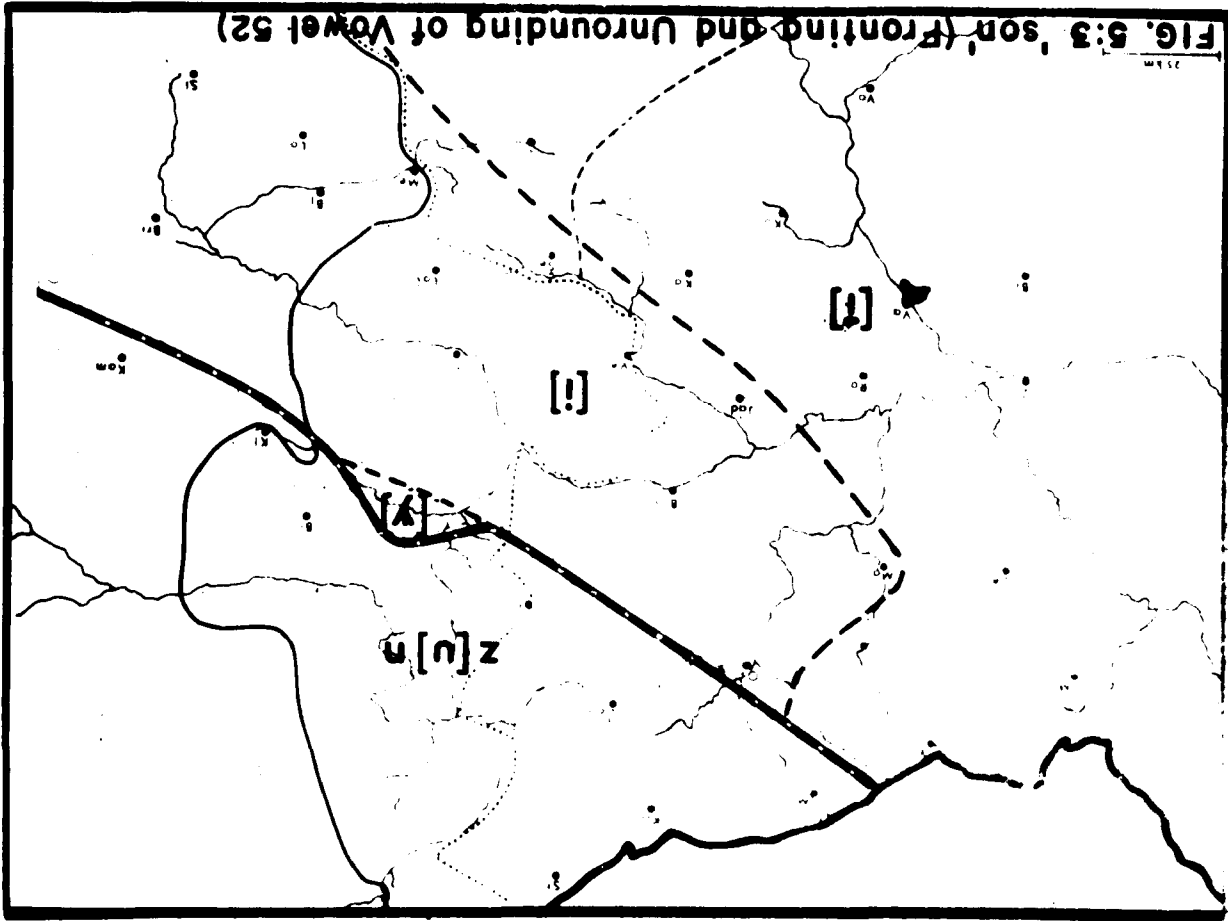
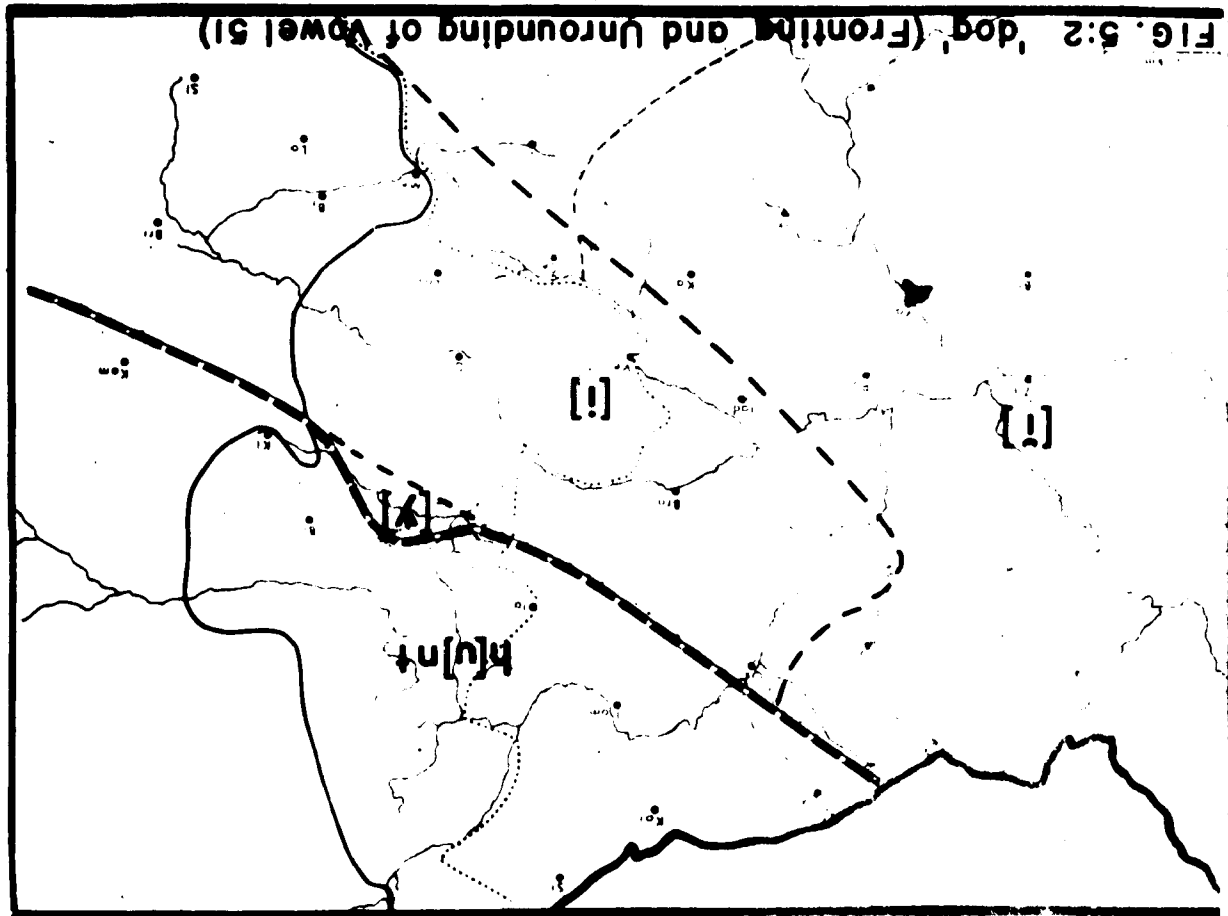
The changes that differentiated PSY from P(N)EY are reconstructed in the following paragraphs.

5.12.1 Fronting of Vowels 51, 52. The fronting of PEY  $\bar{u}_{51}$  and  $\bar{u}_{52}$ , a process whose limits run slightly to the east of Isogloss 1 (Figs. 5:2-5:3), is known to be of considerable antiquity.<sup>5</sup> Birnbaum, who has documented the progress of this change (1934), proposes the following chronology:

Yiddish documents from 14th century Germany indicate that by the middle of that century,  $\bar{u}_{51\ 52}$  was being fronted to [ $\bar{y}$ ].

---

<sup>5</sup>In the maps of Chapter 5, we focus attention only upon the phonological features enclosed in square brackets (cf. Note on Transcription). These brackets do not distinguish phonetic as against phonemic differences. In fact we have often suppressed phonetic details in order to emphasize the functional status of the vowels in question; thus, for any vowel, (e.g. Figs. 5:2-5:3) the indication of [ $\bar{\phantom{x}}$ ] or [ $\bar{\sim}$ ] is a reference to the fact that length is distinctive for the given vowel in that area. The absence of a diacritic indicates that length is not distinctive. No reference is made to the degree of phonetic similarity between, for example, [i] in one area and [ $\bar{i}$ ] or [ $\bar{\sim}$ ] in another. Spectrographic analysis of the allophonic range of /i/ in the non-length area might well



We must assume that the change was being transported to Poland at about the same time although our earliest documentary evidence from the east dates only from the 16th century. From these documents we learn that before the 16th century all original [ū̃]'s had probably disappeared, and that by the middle of the century the resultant [ȳ̃] was being replaced by [ī̃]. By that time original front-rounded vowels had disappeared as well.

Against the background of all the changes specific to SY, the shift of [ū̃] to [ȳ̃] may be reasonably considered the earliest: no other sound change can be proved to have preceded it or to have served as its cause. On the contrary, this shift can serve as the key to all others.<sup>6</sup> The very thoroughness with which it established itself in SY is suggestive of its considerable antiquity.

The obverse of this thoroughgoing development is of course reflected in the failure of fronting to breach the boundary of NEY, with the possible exception of three or four words which occur only with [i]: acínd 'now' (MHG iezunt), zidlen 'to curse' (MHG sudelen), mintern 'to revive' (MHG mundern).<sup>7</sup>

---

yield some insight into the historical relationship between length and non-length varieties (cf. Ivić 1962:51ff.) and, in general, put to the test Prilutski's scattered assertions (1921:285, 289, 304, 396) that in some varieties without length distinctions, the vowels are quantitatively more like those of length distinguishing varieties than like those of other, non-length varieties.

<sup>6</sup> In West Transcarpathian Yiddish (WTCpY), for example, the fronting of vowels 51, 52 represents the only SY phonological change to have penetrated.

<sup>7</sup> There is no reason to assume that jid 'Jew' is another exceptional case. A proto-form with front rounded [y] whose normal development in present-day Yiddish is [i] can also be reconstructed (cf. MHG jǔde alongside of jude).

While we posit the shift of [ǔ] to [ȳ] as the key to the differentiation of Eastern Yiddish dialects, it is difficult to discern the origin of this "first cause" itself.

We find little merit in the suggestion that the process in Yiddish is related to the parallel developments in Slavic (to say nothing of Greek and Latin) adduced by Joffe (1954). The geographic disparity in the Yiddish and Slavic fronting processes--the former beginning in 14th century Germany, the latter in 12th century Ukrainian (cf. Kuraszkievicz 1963:37), and never extending in Slavic beyond Ukrainian, makes it difficult to associate the two.

Whatever the cause of the fronting we can only conclude that specific migration patterns led to the importation of ȳ ɛ1 ɛ2 into Poland. We cannot tell from the geographic evidence whether it was migration that brought the fronting all the way up to Isogloss 1 (and somewhat beyond), or whether having been "planted" in central Poland by migration, the process diffused northeastward "by itself". The evidence does show that the entire indigenous vocabulary was subjected to the change, leaving no trace of individual words being "by-passed"; none "linger" in their unfronted state.

Whereas the deviant distribution of unfronted ɛ1 in several words of Slavic or Standard German origin suggests their recency in Yiddish, it must not be assumed that all other words, having thoroughly undergone the sound change, are necessarily of ancient vintage. The fronting of [ǔ] is demonstrably an old change but the evidence of a "folk-etymological" tendency to subject loan words (from English,



for example) to regular Yiddish dialectal variation is sufficient to suggest that Slavic words, borrowed long after the sound change had occurred, were still analogically submitted to the change which, in a strict sense, had already run its course.<sup>8</sup> In Figs. 5:4-5:6 we witness the attempt of folk etymology to "catch up" with the phonological change. This process, too, has a geographic dimension, but the isoglosses that it manifests, to the west of Isogloss 1, cannot be related to the main process in question.

#### 5.12.2 Unrounding of Vowels 51, 52, and 42.

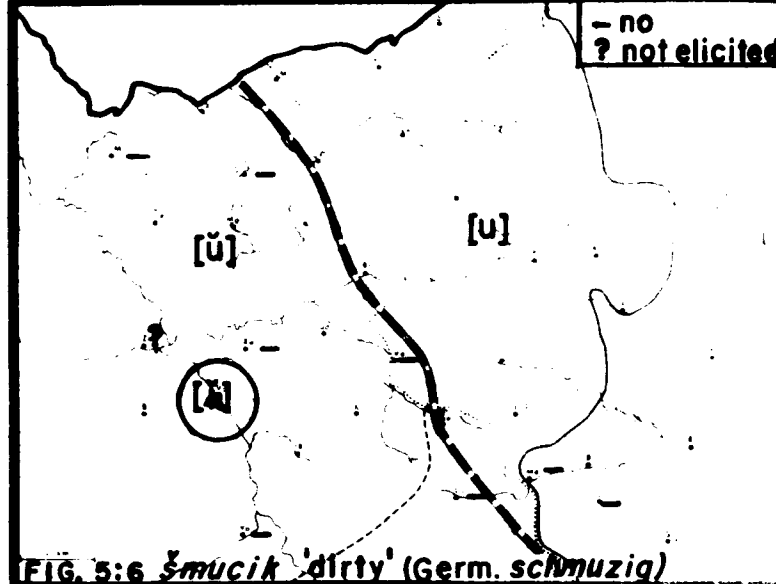
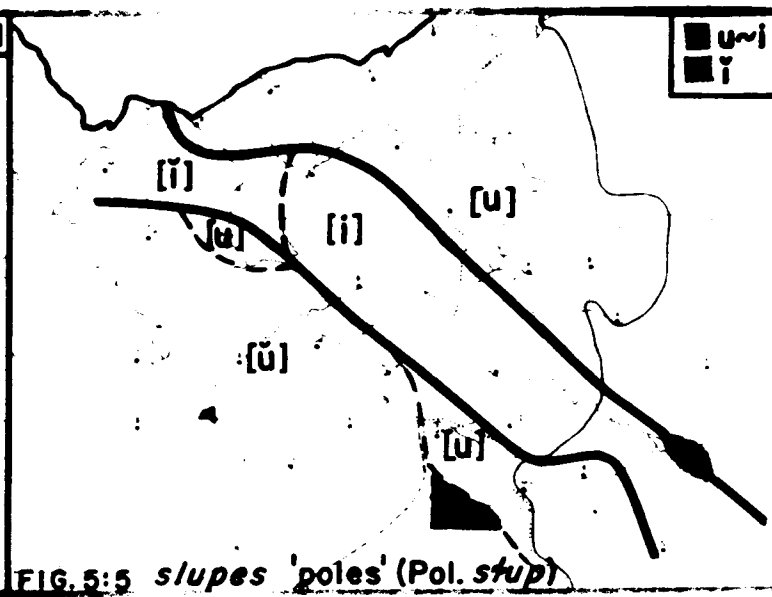
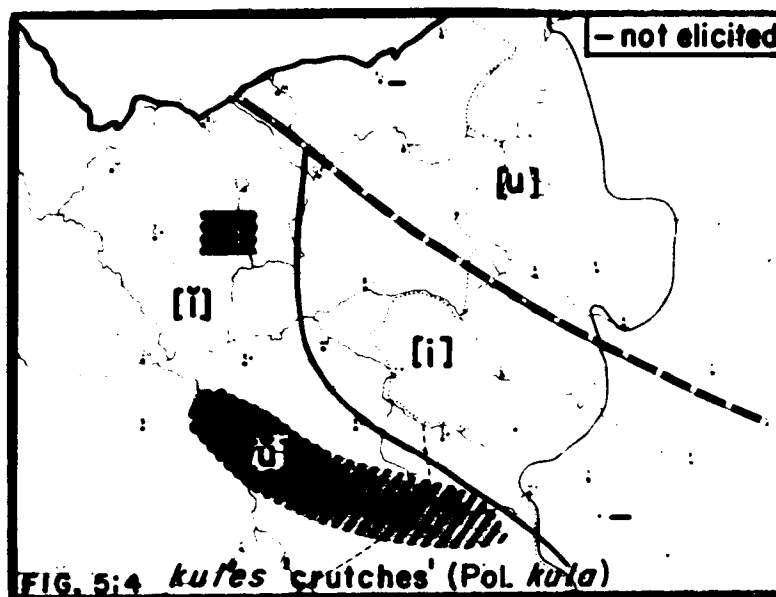
5.12.21 The Fronted Monophthongs. The fronting of PEY  $\bar{u}_{51}$  and  $\bar{u}_{52}$ , although setting in motion a radical restructuring of the vowel system, in itself had no lexical consequences, since it involved no splits or mergers. As we have noted, WTCpY preserved this state. In all of SY, however, there followed a second change with the gravest lexical consequences: the unrounding of  $\bar{y}_{51\ 52}$  (cf. Figs. 5:2-5:6) and their merger with  $\bar{i}_{31\ 32}$  (cf. below §5.12.211).

We have observed in the preceding illustrations that  $y_{51\ 52}$  was actually recorded in only a single community (Brajnsk).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>While their phonology may sometimes provide a clue to the antiquity of particular Yiddish place names, the cited caution might well be exercised in cases where settlement history remains unclear. Only one of the town names covered by this investigation, Likave [likavə], (Pol. Łuków), exhibits the shift of vowel 51.

<sup>9</sup>The occurrence of front rounded [y] in Brajnsk was first noted by Y. Kats (1924) who also observed what he recorded as [ju] in nearby Kláščel. No trace of the latter appears in our own data.



## Recent Slavic and German Loanwords

Additional instances have been noted along the eastern extension of the y/i isogloss where it runs roughly between Belorussia and the Ukraine. It is, of course, impossible to determine whether any of these are survivals of the posited [y] stage or simply more recent border compromises between [u] and [i]. Yet certain evidence favors the former assumption that [y] is a survival. Although we have rejected the proposal that fronting in Yiddish and Slavic are causally related developments (§5.12.1), it is nevertheless plausible that the retention of front rounded [y] around Brajnsk received local support from a similar phenomenon in coteritorial Slavic. As Kuraszkievicz writes (1963:68f.):

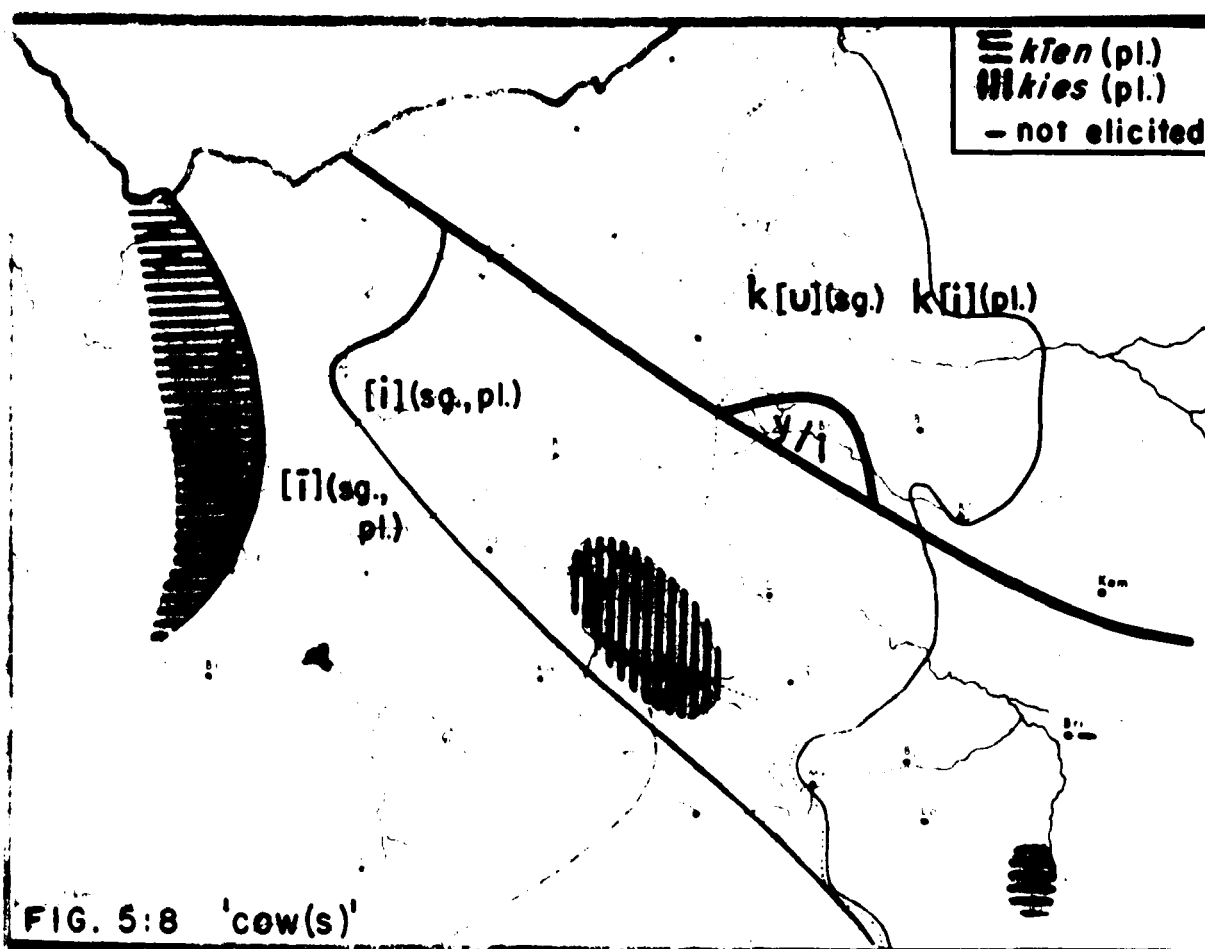
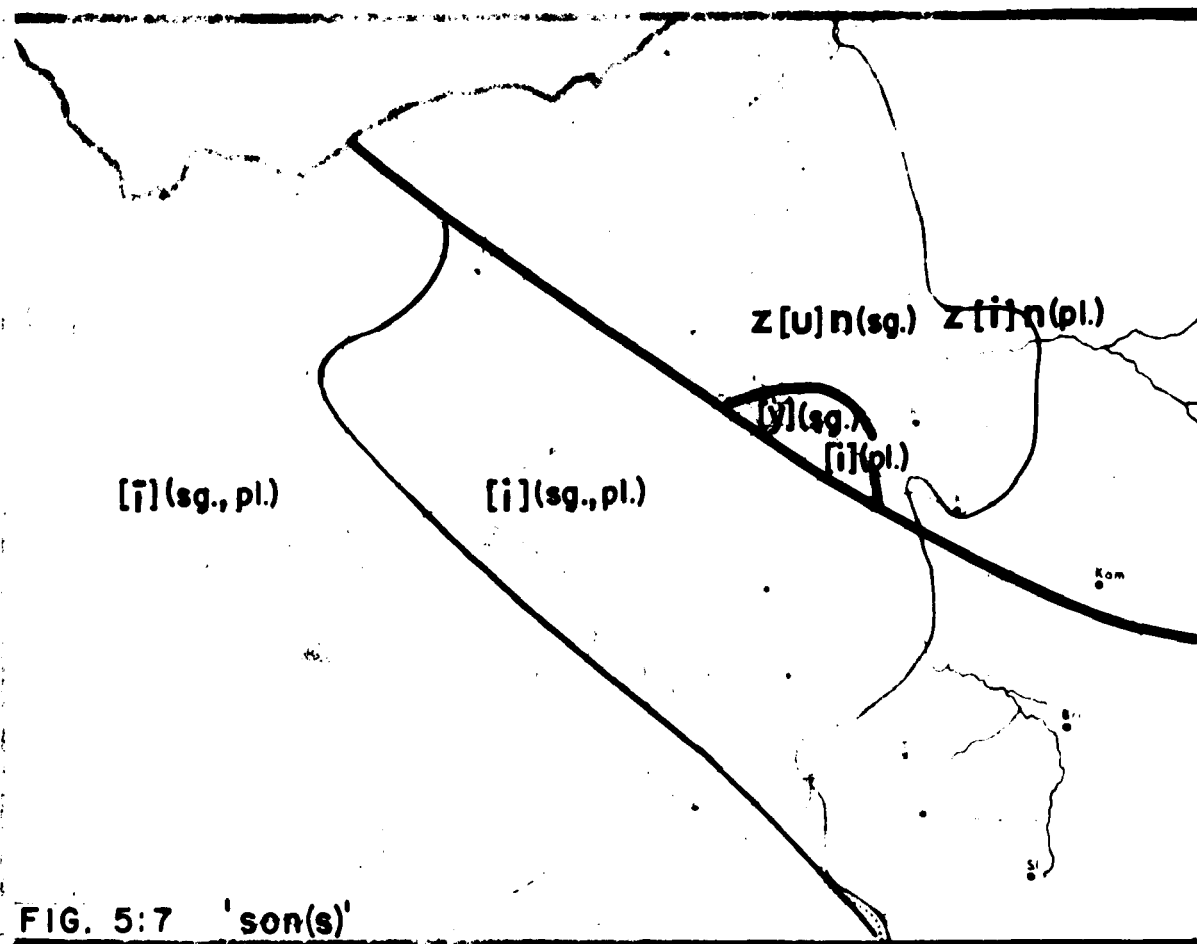
In many local dialects of Polesie and Podlasie, as well as in southern Belorussian dialects as far as Vilna, the lengthened, stressed vowels ō, ē in checked syllables, and ě, did not yet turn into ī, but have remained at some preceding stage of development . . . ūō, ūē, ūy, ūi, i', or a plain vowel u, y, ū . . . .

This phenomenon is both geographically and phonologically too close to that of the Yiddish in Brajnsk to be disregarded.<sup>10</sup>

5.12.211 Grammatical Consequences of Unrounding. The merger of vowels 51 and 31, 52 and 32, in SY, obliterated a regular process of plural formation that had depended on the alternation of [u] and [i] alone (e.g. Fig. 5:7). Consequently, new plurals have emerged in the area affected by the resulting homonymy: [kī] 'cow': pl. [kī/kīn/kīs], (Fig. 5:8), [brīder] 'brother': pl. [brīder/brīders/

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<sup>10</sup>In addition we find that in the Brest dialect of Ukrainian, specifically in the village of Kobylany, 7 kilometers west of Brest, Kuraszkievicz has noted (ibid.:153f.) the prevalence of front rounded [y]; eg. kūn 'horse', wūn 'he', žūncy 'wife (dat.)'. There is no apparent connection between the Yiddish unrounding of [y] and the unrounding of [y] in mid-16th century Ukrainian. Yet, the possibility that the two are related should be subjected to further scrutiny.

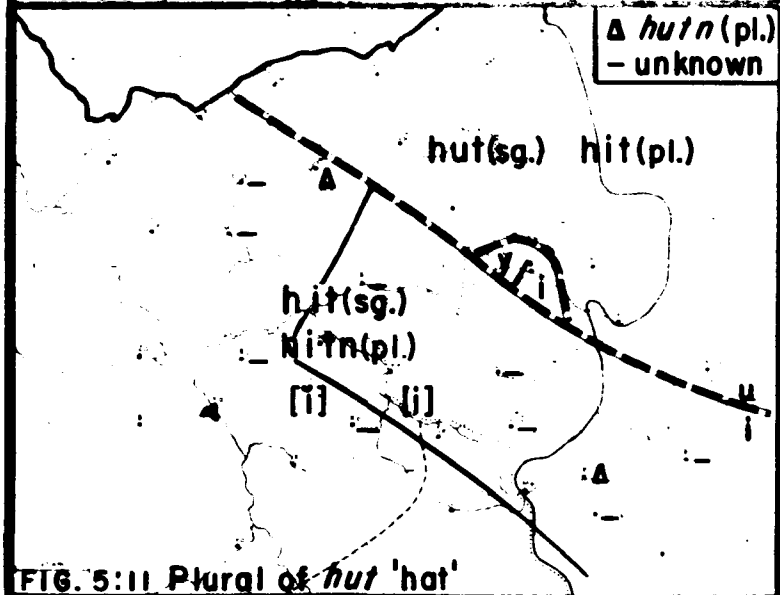
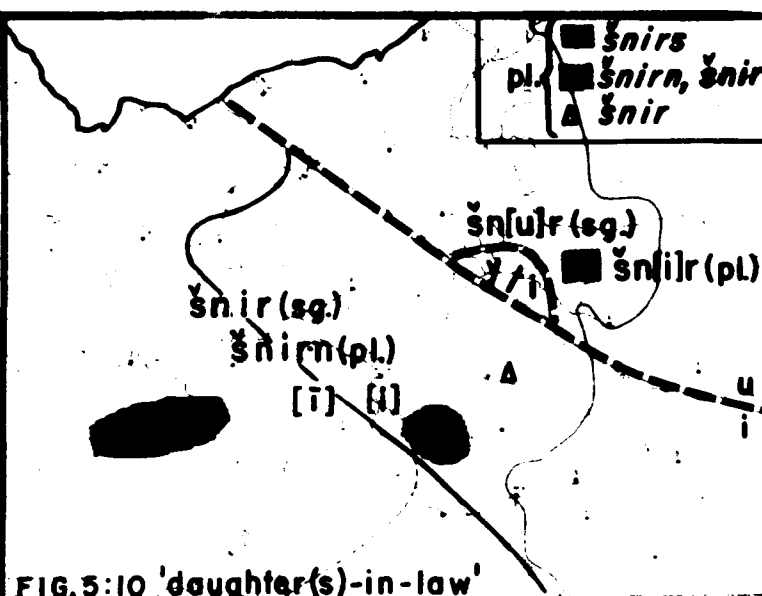
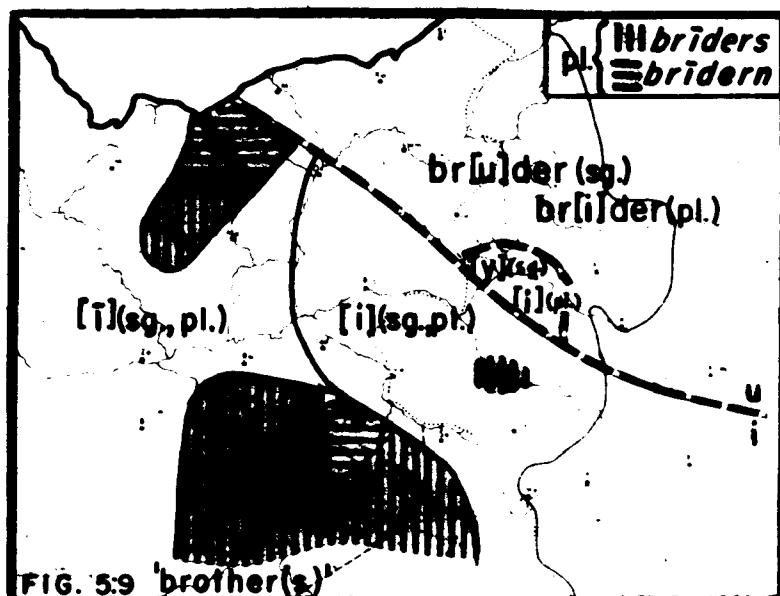


brīdērn] (Fig. 5:9), [šnīr] 'daughter-in-law': pl. [šnīrn/šnīrs] (Fig. 5:10), [hīt] 'hat': pl. [hītn] (Fig. 5:11). In the last of these examples the very rarity of the lexical item in the [ī] area suggests that the two instances of [hūtn] that occur there are recent importations from the east.

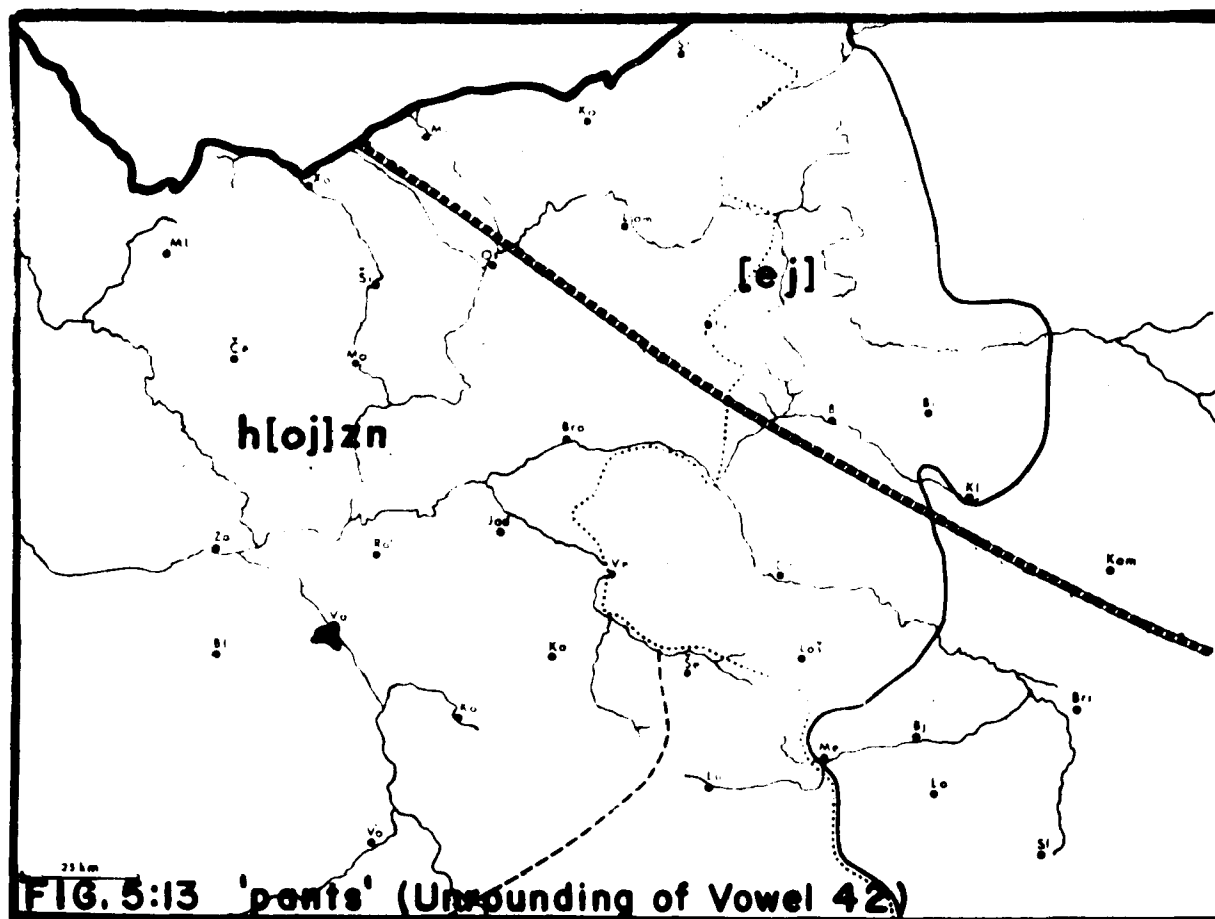
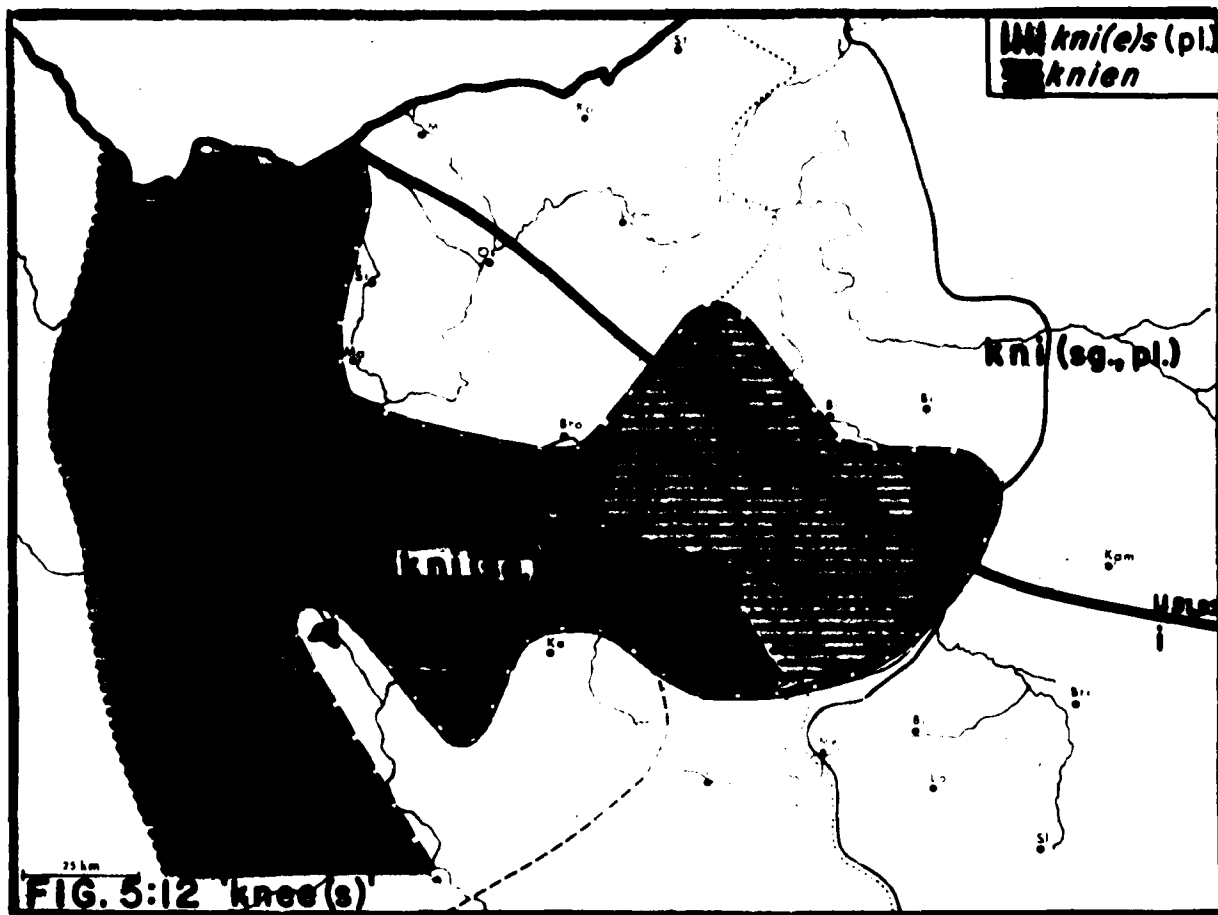
What may be a case of analogical overcompensation for the sound change is illustrated in Fig. 5:12. A new plural [knīēn] 'knees' of singular knī (with vowel 32) has penetrated beyond the limits of the change, (but cf. above §4.13.3).

5.12.22 The Fronted Diphthong. As Fig. 5:13 shows, the PEY diphthong ɥ<sub>42</sub> has not survived in its rounded form. It has been fully unrounded in the part of NEY under investigation (cf. §5.14.2), and "half-unrounded" in CY, so that it has a back nucleus, [o], and a front off glide, [j]. The limit of this half-unrounding coincides literally with the unrounding of the monophthongs. Note that Brajnsk with front-rounded y<sub>51 52</sub>, nevertheless has the 42 diphthong in its fully unrounded NEY form [ej]. (This ordering differs from WICpY, where the unrounding of ɥ<sub>42</sub> precedes that of y<sub>51 52</sub>.) There appear to be no structural consequences of the change of ɥ<sub>42</sub> > oj.

The excellent agreement of the two isoglosses allows us to speak of a single SY "unrounding" process to include the full unrounding of PEY ū<sub>51</sub> and ū<sub>52</sub> and the half unrounding of PEY ɥ<sub>42</sub>. In §5.14.2 we will describe more fully the unrounding of 42 in NEY, and the geography of the variation CY oj<sub>42</sub> vs. NEY ej<sub>42</sub>.



FIGS. 5:8-5:11  
Grammatical Consequences  
of SY Merger of U 51,52  
and i 31,32



5.12.3 Raising of Vowel 12. The raising of PEY  $\bar{o}_{12}$  to PSY  $[\bar{u}]$  was probably a structural consequence of the fronting of PEY  $\bar{u}_{52}$  (drag chain) and perhaps of the raising of vowel 54 (push-chain; see §5.13.4 below). In Figure 5:14 the border between the [o] and [u] variants is virtually Isogloss 1. We will observe below that later length developments led to the NEY merger of 12 and 41 in [o] (§5.14.1) and to the CY splitting of  $\bar{u}_{12}$  into  $[\bar{u}/\bar{u}]$  (§5.13.3).

The variants of the words tířebòv 'the 9th day of Av' (Fig. 5:15) and borves 'barefoot' (Fig. 5:16) display an exceptional distribution which suggests that in both words PEY  $\bar{o}_{12}$  was subjected to early shortening.

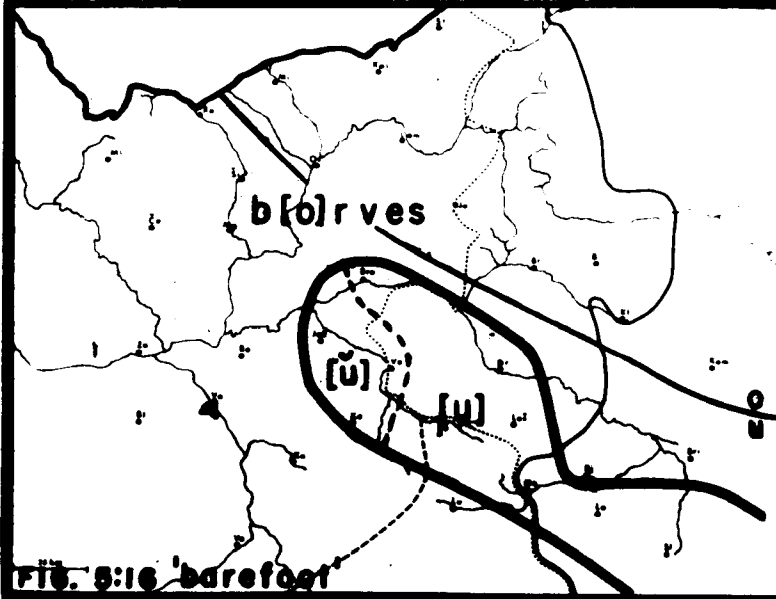
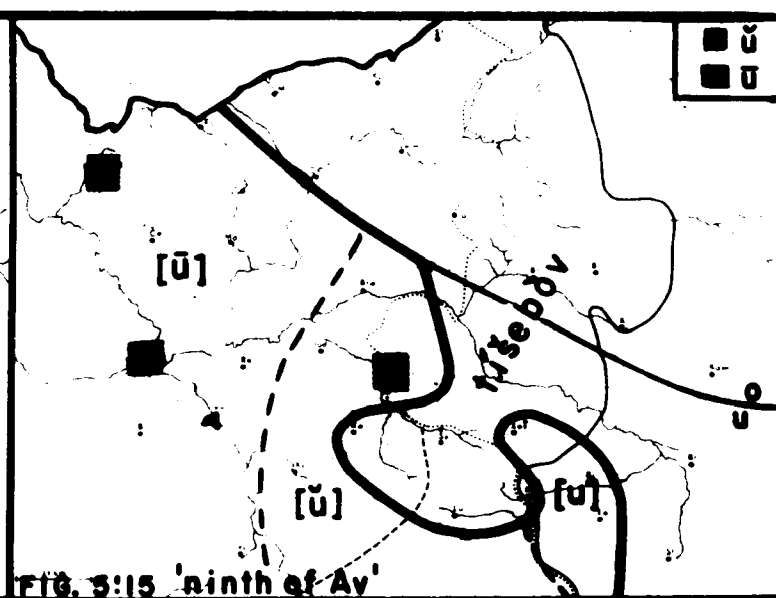
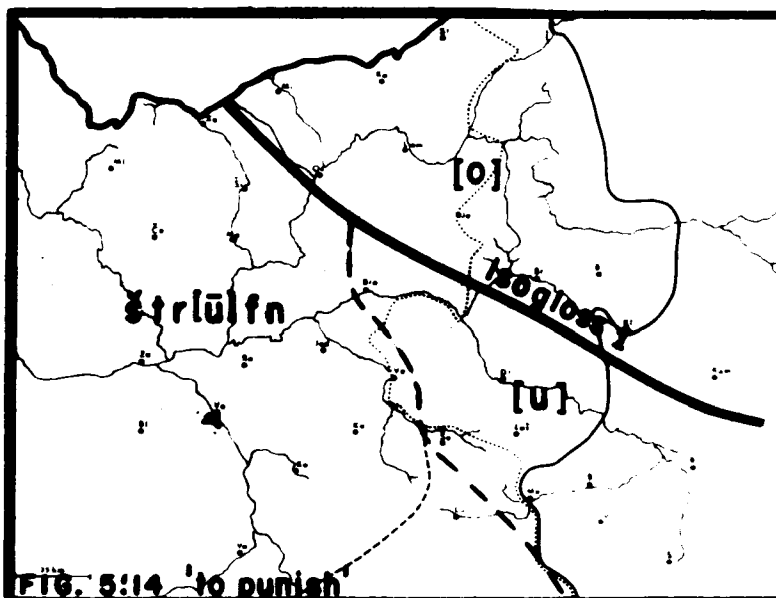
Another apparent exception to the normal variants of vowel 12 was previously illustrated in Fig. 3:66. However, the alternation of CY  $[\bar{u}]$  with NEY [a] which was shown there, e.g. tačke 'wheelbarrow' (also in ščav 'sorrel' and other items) can be attributed to the separate origin of the variants. CY  $[\bar{u}]$  undoubtedly entered the language from the Polish dialectal variant in a and was later subjected to the normal shift of  $\bar{o}_{12}$  to  $[\bar{u}]$  ( $> [\bar{u}/\bar{u}]$ ).

Lexical variants aside, the raising of vowel 12 in our area coincides almost perfectly with the fronting of  $\bar{u}_{51\ 52}$ .<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>The coexistence of front-rounded  $y_{51\ 52}$  and  $\bar{o}_{12}$  in Brajnsk, and of front-unrounded  $i_{51\ 52}$  and  $\bar{o}_{12}$  in Ostrelenke, is exceptional. In contrast to the surrounding communities, however, where vowel 12 is an open [o], Ostrelenke displays an apparently free variation between [o] and [o]. Prilutski (1921:398) described vowel 12 in Ostrelenke as being "between o and u--closer to u". The relationship of this [o] to other developments in Ostrelenke will be treated below (§5.14.32).



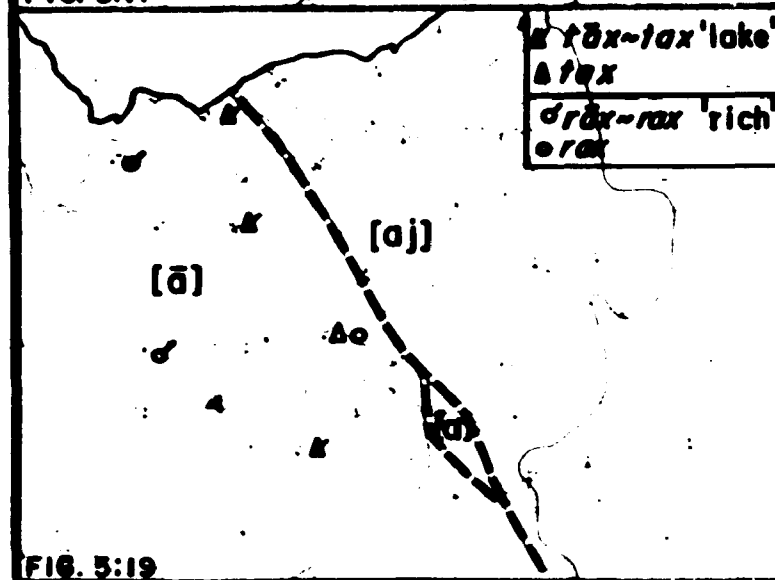
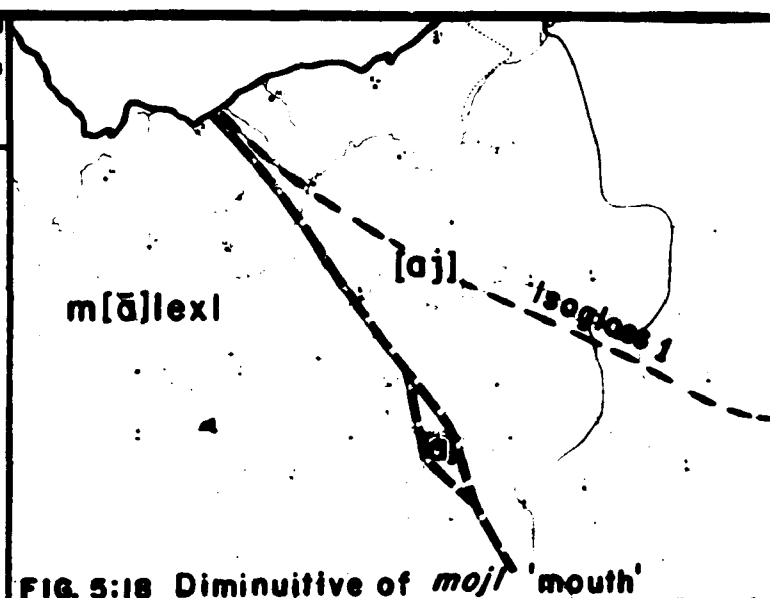
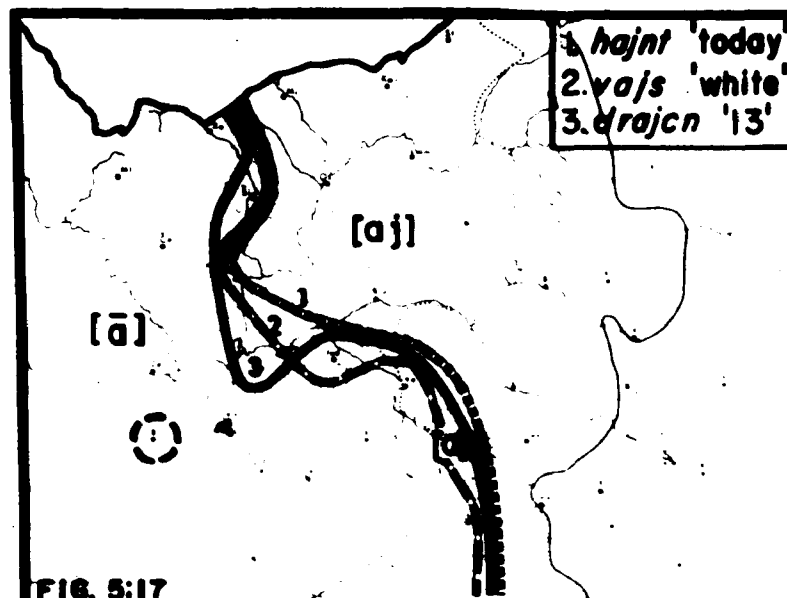


## THE RAISING OF VOWEL 12

While this is in contrast to WTCpY where the raising process has lagged behind the fronting, we have no chronological evidence and no substantial geographic evidence for considering them separate processes. Thus, for all we know, a ready-made "Proto-SY" with fronted 51, 52, and raised 12 may have been brought approximately into its present position by migrating Yiddish speakers.

5.12.4 Monophthongization of 34. The raising of PY  $\bar{a}_{12}$  to PEY [ō], followed perhaps by the closing of au<sub>54</sub> to [ou], left a hole in the pattern which was later filled by the Proto-SY monophthongization of PEY aj<sub>34</sub>. These pressures provide a more adequate explanation for the monophthongization than those created by the lowering of PSY ej<sub>22</sub> to [aj] (see below §5.13.1), since the lowering must have come much later and is characteristic only of the CY branch of SY. In SEY, on the other hand, where aj<sub>34</sub> was similarly monophthongized, ej<sub>22</sub> was not lowered. (The fact that no long [ā] was ever restored in the north-eastern system suggests the very early loss of vocalic length in NEY.)

That there is considerable variation in the distribution of the monophthongal and diphthongal alternants of 34 is apparent from Fig. 5:17, but these are simply lexical irregularities (which we attribute to relatively recent diffusion from NEY), and an  $\bar{a}/aj$  isogloss is easily discernible despite them (Fig. 5:18). Far to the west of Isogloss 1, it coincides more nearly with Isogloss 2 representing a second stage in the formation of the area. It is noteworthy that the SY monophthongization of aj<sub>34</sub> falls short of both the raising of  $\bar{o}_{12}$  and the fronting of  $\bar{u}_{51\ 52}$  not only in



**MONOPHTHONGIZATION OF VOWEL 34**

**FIG. 5:17 LEXICAL IRREGULARITIES**

**FIG. 5:18 NORMAL VARIATION**

**FIG. 5:19 IRREGULAR OCCURRENCE OF**  
**a 34**

Northern Poland, but all the way east through the Ukraine as well (cf. Vilenkin 1931: Maps 1, 19-20, 26-30).<sup>12</sup>

Alternative explanations may be proposed to account for the relative locations of these isoglosses: either the monophthongization never spread much beyond its present location or, at one time, it went as far as Isogloss 1 and subsequently receded. We are more inclined to accept the first explanation.

Monophthongization ([aj] > [ā]) could only have developed (without creating lexical havoc) in areas where length was distinctive,<sup>13</sup> and since the only substantial evidence we have of a merger of vowels 34 and 11 in [a] is restricted to a single community, Šedlec (cf. Fig. 5:18) it is not likely that ā<sub>34</sub> was ever much more widespread than at present. In Šedlec the merger is not easily disentangled. Homonyms like [mal<sub>34</sub>xl] 'mouth (dim.)'='angel (dim.)' and [hant] 'hand'='today', and inevitable hypercorrections like [najs] 'wet', [cajt] 'party (to a dispute)', [amerikaj<sub>34</sub>ner] 'American' (cf. nas, cad, amerikaner, with ā<sub>11</sub> elsewhere) are rife. (The occurrence of ā<sub>34</sub> elsewhere (Fig. 5:19) is highly sporadic and usually restricted to the environment of [x].)

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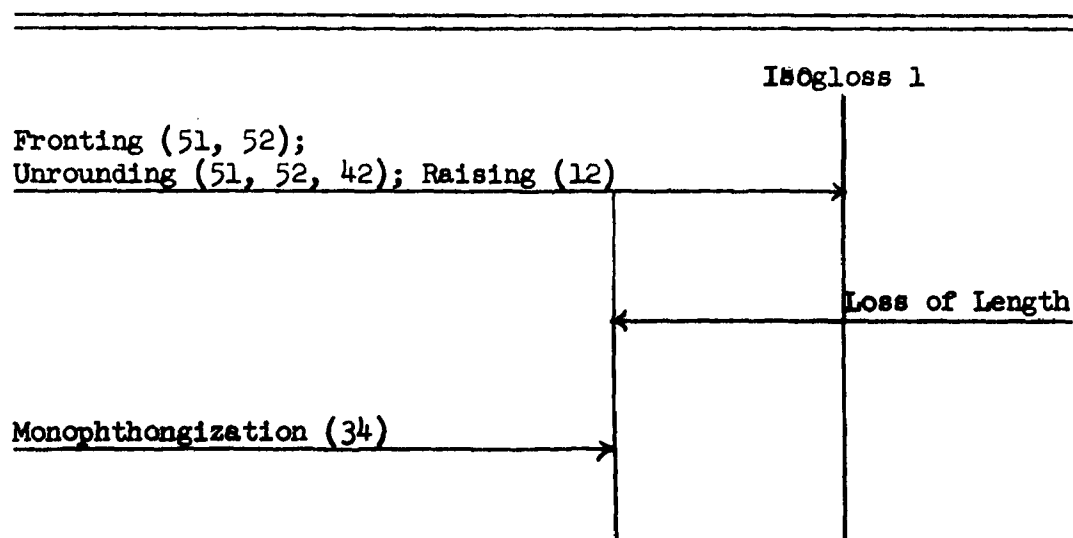
<sup>12</sup>The dialectal compromise from which present-day "Stage-Yiddish" seems to have emerged also displays SY raised u<sub>12</sub>, and front unrounded i<sub>51</sub> i<sub>52</sub>, but NEY diphthongal aj<sub>34</sub> (cf. Prilutski 1927).

<sup>13</sup>Since PSY aj<sub>34</sub> has also been monophthongized in SEY, where vocalic length is not distinctive, and yet the resulting a<sub>34</sub> has not, as a rule, merged with a<sub>11</sub>, we must assume the prior SEY shift of a<sub>11</sub>, in certain positions, to [o]. (The evidence is simply inadequate, and somewhat too contradictory, to permit us to establish a relationship between o<sub>11</sub> in SEY and the [o] variants of the lexical items illustrated in Figs. 3:4, 3:19 etc. Thus SEY 11 did not become [o] before [k]; cf. Fig. 3:19.)

It is also conceivable that  $\bar{a}_{34}$  had diffused much further eastward before encountering the wave of length elimination from NEY, provided, however, that the loss of length was preceded by a word for word replacement of lexical items with  $\bar{a}_{34}$  by [aj] (everywhere but in Šedlec); but this seems to be a less likely alternative. The present-day lexical diffusion of words with  $\underline{aj}_{34}$  on [a] territory appears to reflect a consequence (rather than a prerequisite) of contact with length elimination (cf. §5.15).

In depicting the chronology that we have arrived at thus far (Table 9) we have disregarded the slight variation in the distribution of the fronting, unrounding, and raising processes.

TABLE 9  
CHRONOLOGY OF PROTO-SY DIVERGENCE



### 5.13 Fresh Innovations from the SW: Evolution of CY

5.13.1 Lowering of 22. The distinctive trait of CY, within the SY family, is the lowering of PSY  $\underline{ej}_{22}$  to  $\underline{aj}$ ; thus: CY

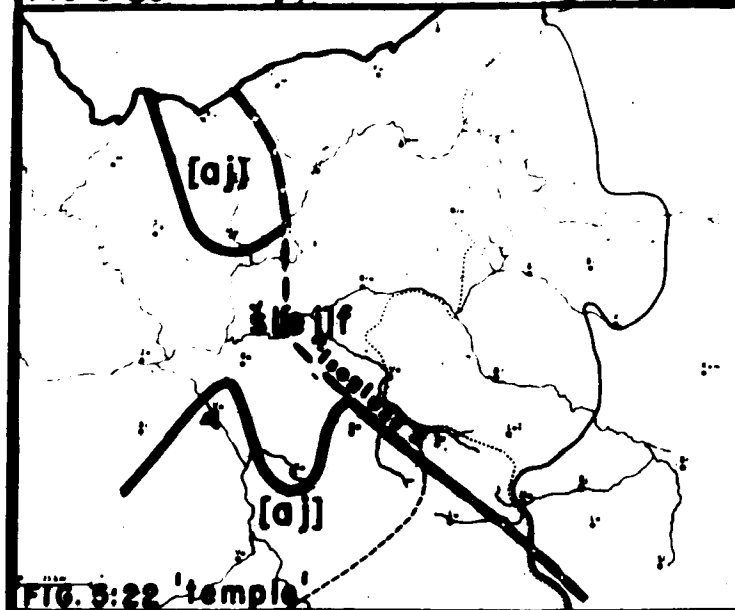
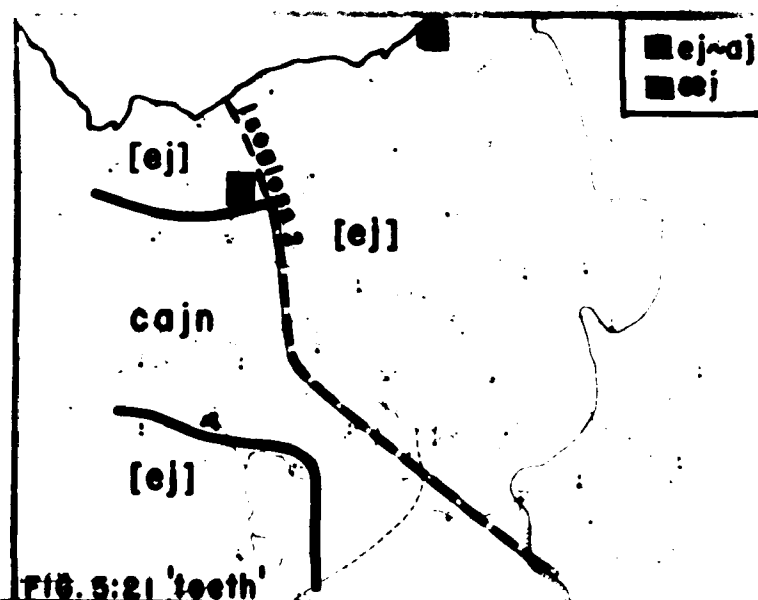
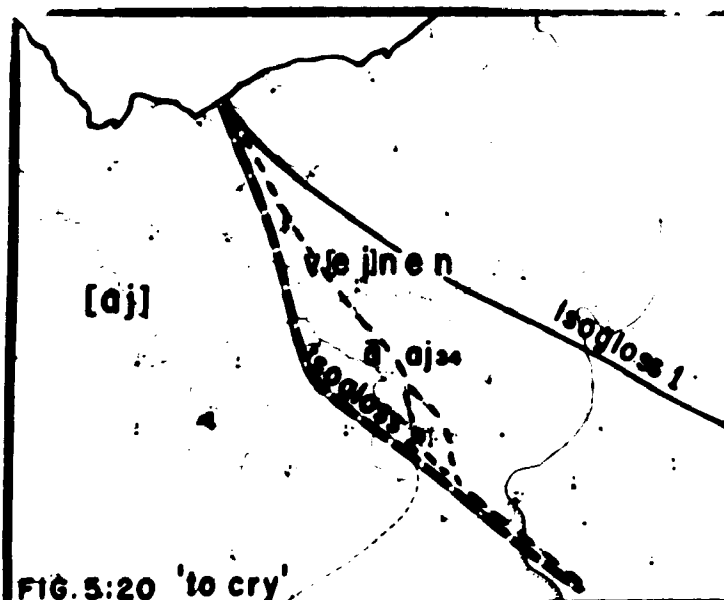
[majləx] 'king', [zajdə] 'grandfather' but SEY [mejləx], [zejdə].

The line between CY aj<sub>22</sub> and the [ej] variants to the east (Fig. 5:20) is, in fact, Isogloss 2, running somewhat to the west of the monophthongization of aj<sub>34</sub>. The lowering process could only have followed the monophthongization and may conceivably have reached its borders before receding again. It is equally likely, however, that the two never coincided. Neither alternative is susceptible of proof on the basis of present evidence (cf. also §5.13.2).

Two types of disturbances of the regular distribution of the [aj] and [ej] variants of 22 were recorded. The first of these is illustrated by the words cejn 'teeth' (Fig. 5:21) and šlejf 'temple' (Fig. 5:22), where the distribution of the [ej] variants in particular is most unusual. It is plausible that PY lexical doublets account for the present situation. In the case of cejn 'teeth', for example, wherever we find the [ej] and [aj] variants of 22 (in this case virtually 23) in their normal locations we may assume a proto-form with short [e] in open syllable (cf. MHG zene). Where [cejn] occurs in the [aj] area, however, it might conceivably be related to a proto-form in which [e], in closed syllable, went the way of PSY ē<sub>25</sub> (cf. MHG zende).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>This argument may quickly be countered by pointing out that while it is true that the proto-forms of 25 are found both in open and closed syllables, it appears that the vowel of (all?) their MHG counterparts was ē. On the other hand, we find that many MHG words with ē have Yiddish counterparts with e<sub>21</sub>, and thus it is within the realm of the possible that some instances of original short [ē] in closed syllable (i.e. 21), should have followed the development of vowel 25. No other explanation is apparent.



## LOWERING OF VOWEL 22

FIG. 5:20 NORMAL VARIATION

FIGS. 5:21 - 5:22 LEXICAL  
IRREGULARITIES

The complexity of this particular problem is increased by the morphological evidence. While there are many instances of singular-plural alternations of  $\underline{o}/\underline{u}_{12}$  and  $\underline{e}/\underline{ej}_{25}$ : [fon/fun] 'flag': pl. [fənr/fejnr], [štot/štut] 'city': pl. [štet/štejt], we know of no instance other than [con/cun] 'tooth': pl. [cejn(ər)] in which  $\underline{o}/\underline{u}_{12}$  and  $\underline{ej}/\underline{aj}_{22}$  alternate.

A second type of disturbance in the regular variation of vowel 22 may have been morphologically induced.<sup>15</sup> In Figs. 5:23-5:25 we find no encroachment of [ej] upon the [aj] territory, but instead the partial displacement of both by [oj]. In each of the illustrated cases the vowel of a related word may have been extended analogically to the cited forms: [éjberšte/ájberšte/ójberšte] 'upper' (Fig. 5:23): [ojbm] 'above'; [réjxərn/rájxərn/rójxərn] 'to smoke' (Fig. 5:24): [rojx] 'smoke';<sup>16</sup> [fejgl(ən)/fajgl/fojgl(ən)] 'birds' (Fig. 5:25): [fojgl] 'bird'.

5.13.2 Diphthongization of 25. The diphthongization of PSY  $\bar{e}_{25}$  (CY  $\underline{ej}_{25}$ ) must have followed the lowering of  $\underline{ej}_{22}$  everywhere except, as reported by Prilutski (1921:272), in Víškeve (on the very border of  $\underline{aj}/\underline{ej}_{22}$  and  $\bar{a}/\underline{aj}_{24}$ ; (cf. Fig. 5:26).<sup>16a</sup> In Víškeve we have evidence that there was a chronological reversal of the lowering and the diphthongization that led to a merger of 25 and 22 in [aj], and yielded such unusual homonyms as [tajg] 'days' = 'dough' and [lajbm] 'to live' =

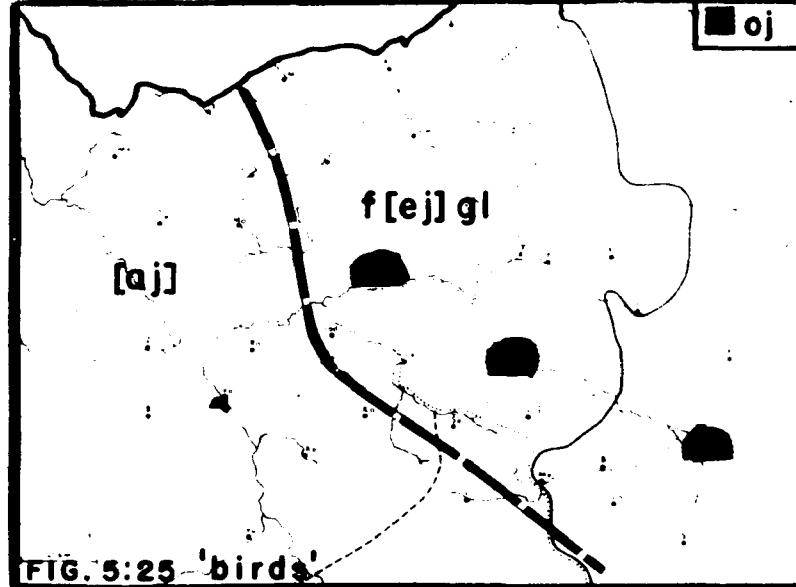
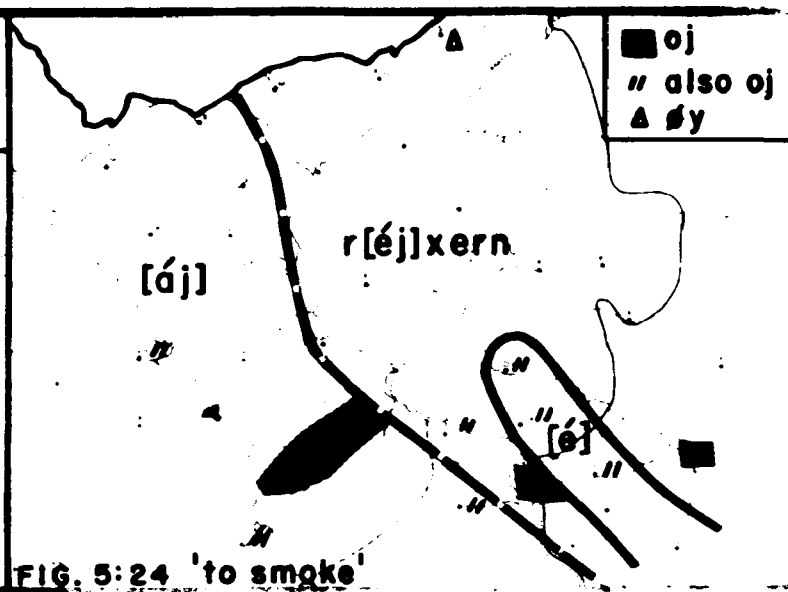
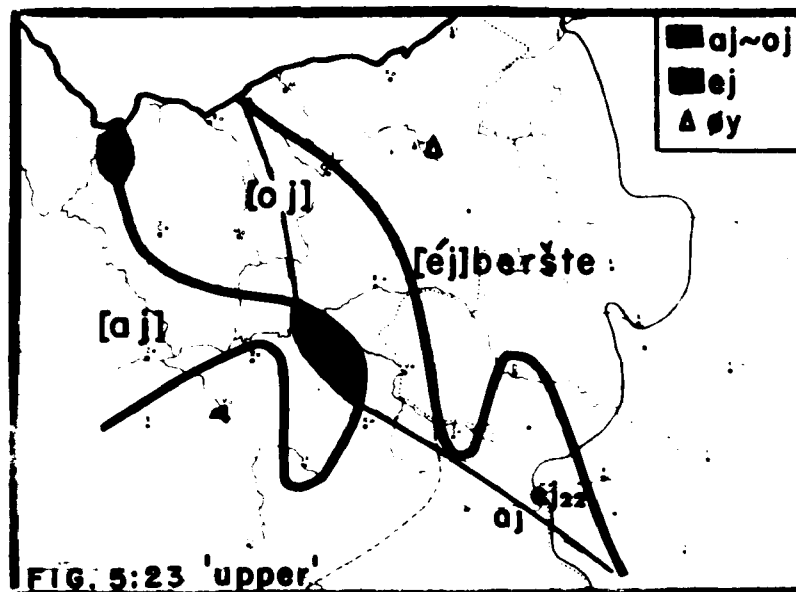
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<sup>15</sup> In §5.14.2 we will encounter an alternative to the explanation proposed here.

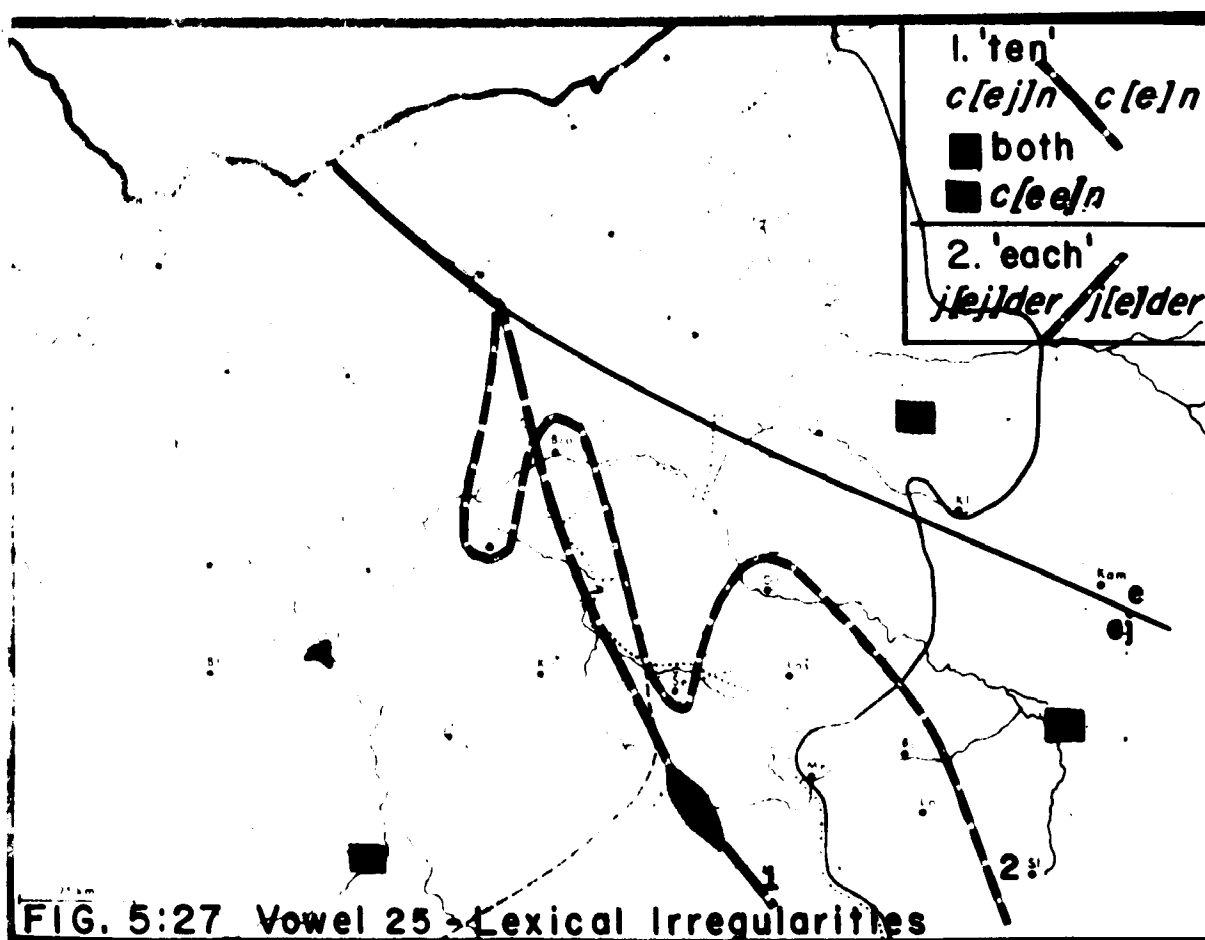
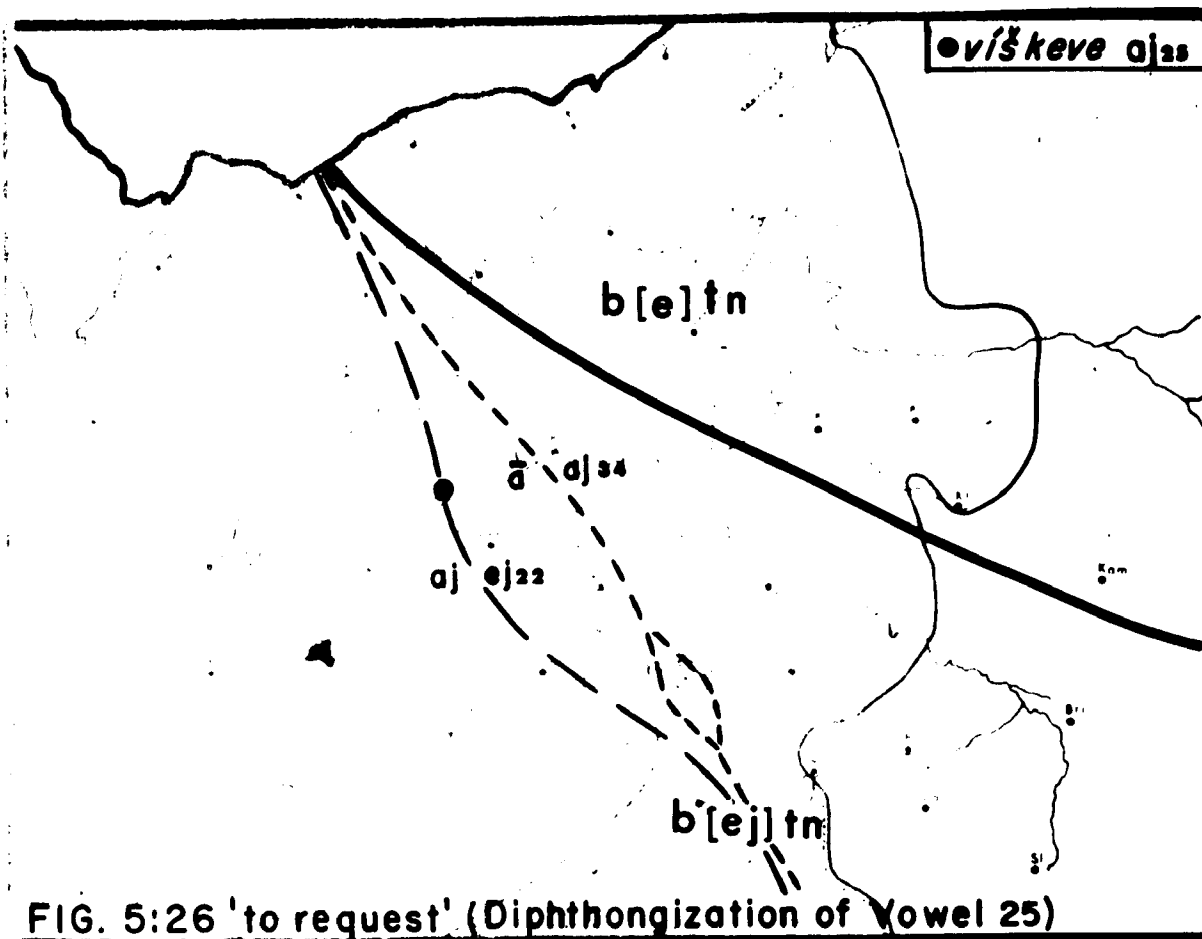
<sup>16</sup> On the [β(y)] and [e] variants in Figs. 5:23-5:24 cf. §5.14.2.

<sup>16a</sup> Structural imbalance resulting from the presence of a long mid front vowel unmatched in the back series may have spurred the change  $\bar{e}$  to  $\underline{ej}$ .





## LOWERING OF VOWEL 22: LEXICAL IRREGULARITIES



'lions'.

We noted earlier (§5.13.1) that the CY lowering of ej<sub>22</sub>, though it necessarily followed the SY monophthongization of aj<sub>24</sub>, did not necessarily keep up with it. On the other hand, CY aj<sub>22</sub> could as easily have been pushed back to its present location (cf. Fig. 5:94). Either explanation would account for the lack of an [aj] diphthong in the communities that lie between the two isoglosses (Jádeve, Věngreve, and Šedlec). There is some evidence, however, to suggest that ej<sub>22</sub> was retained rather than restored in these communities and that its retention hampered the diphthongization of PSY ē<sub>25</sub>.

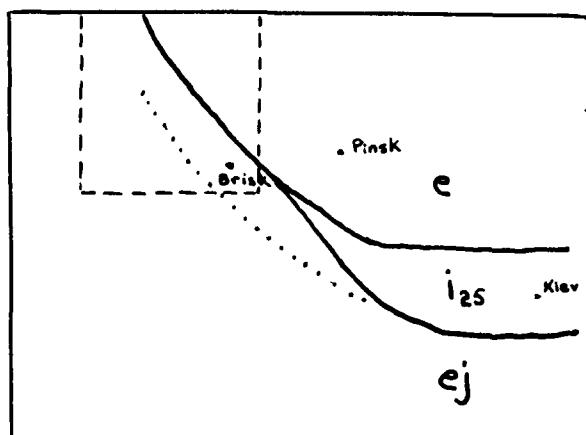
In SEY, for example, where ej<sub>22</sub> was not lowered, ē<sub>25</sub> became [ĩ]. Our materials contain no evidence of anything but ej<sub>25</sub> in Poland but, fortunately, we have explicit indications from Prilutski (1920: 19, 1921:258f.) that ĩ<sub>25</sub> characterized the speech of the 60-70 year olds in Věngreve (one of the three affected towns) and was the object of mockery by the younger generation.

Thus the retention of ej<sub>22</sub> may, at first, have diverted a changing PSY ē<sub>25</sub> to [ĩ]. In Věngreve, Jádeve and Šedlec this would not have led to a merger of 25 with any other [i] vowels (Cf. §5.15.2), and its subsequent lowering and diphthongization to [ej] was a highly plausible and predictable development. This is demonstrably the sequence in which SEY change can be shown to have occurred.

However, if we are to rely on all of Prilutski's data, we must also note that vowel 25 was [ĩ] in the speech of one of his informants from Kalesín where ej<sub>22</sub> was lowered to [aj] (1920:20). It would appear then that 25 was [ĩ] even before the lowering of 22. If,

nevertheless, we do not discount our previous argument, it is because we fail to see how the reported  $\underline{y}_{25}$  in Kalešín (in contrast to Věngreve) could subsequently have been disentangled from  $\underline{y}_{31}$   $s_1$ .

In the diagram below we have indicated the approximate relationship between the variants of vowel 25 in SEY and those in CY and NEY. With the help of Prilutski's information we can safely project the SEY border between  $\underline{ej}_{25}$  and  $\underline{y}_{25}$  (the dotted line in the diagram below) in order to depict the earlier state in our own area. The resulting picture, with a wedge between CY and NEY connecting the NCY area with SEY is remarkably similar to a large number of previous illustrations (cf. also Figs. 3:40, 4:87ff. and 6:42).



Whatever the likelihood of an intermediary [ɨ] stage in the CY development of vowel 25 wherever  $\underline{ej}_{25}$  was not lowered, it is apparent from SEY that the diphthongization of 25 to [ej] was not structurally dependent upon this lowering.

Returning now to Fig. 5:26 we note that the limit of diphthongization is completely coincident with Isogloss 1. Lexical deviations

from this distribution are each rather unique. In Fig. 5:27 the variants [cejn], [cen] 'ten' may have had Proto-Yiddish doublets (cf. MHG zēhen, zehen). On the other hand, [jejdər], [jedər] 'each' suggests a merger of PY  $\bar{e}_{25}$  and  $\bar{i}_{22}$  in initial position (cf. MHG ieder). This is illustrated again by the strange distribution of [fməcər/éməcər/éjməcər] 'someone' in Fig. 5:28 (cf. MHG iemān, ētewer?).

Yet another phenomenon, the confusion of vowels 25 and 22 is portrayed in Figs. 5:29-5:30. The most surprising feature of Fig. 5:30 is the eastward extension of an [ej] variant beyond Isogloss 1. This may be the direct result of the described contamination.

Aside from the lexical deviations there is one further regular development of vowel 25 that merits description: monophthongization to [e] before [r] (also characteristic of Yiddish in the Ukraine) appears to be a more recent (south)westward moving phenomenon (Fig. 5:31).

5.13.3 Splitting of Vowel 12. The monophthongization of  $\bar{a}_{34}$  (>[ā]) made for a CY vowel system in which length was distinctive for all vowel qualities except  $\bar{u}_{12}$ . As if to make the pattern more symmetrical a split yielded CY  $\bar{u}_{12}$  distinct from  $\bar{u}_{12}$ .

Unlike other oppositions, only a single contrast permits us to establish this distinction in all of our length distinguishing communities: [šlūfn] 'to sleep' (Fig. 5:32) vs. [štrūfn] 'to punish' (cf. above Fig. 5:14); but even this contrast fails in Mákeve, where [šlūfn] varies freely with [šlūfn]. With the exception of this instance of free variation, the [ū] and [ū] in Mákeve are in complementary distribution. The conditions of complementation are given two paragraphs below. Length contrasts can be established with pairs other than [šlūfn/

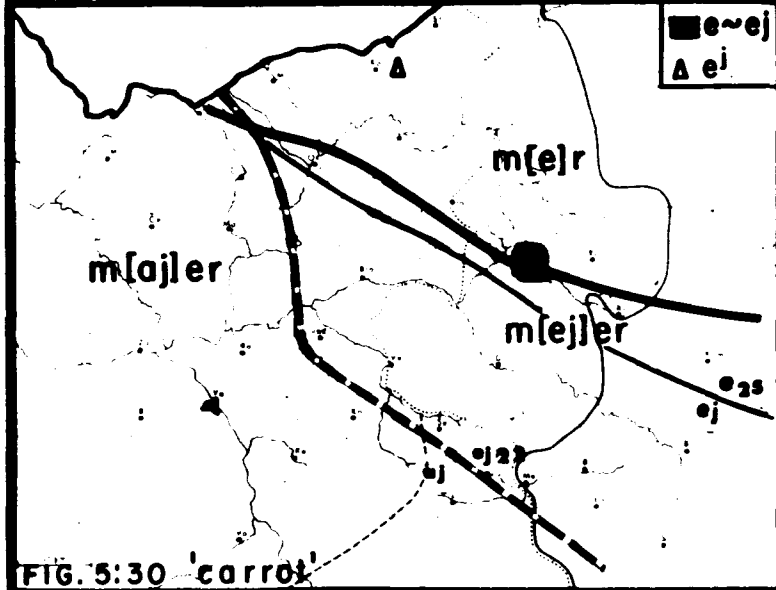
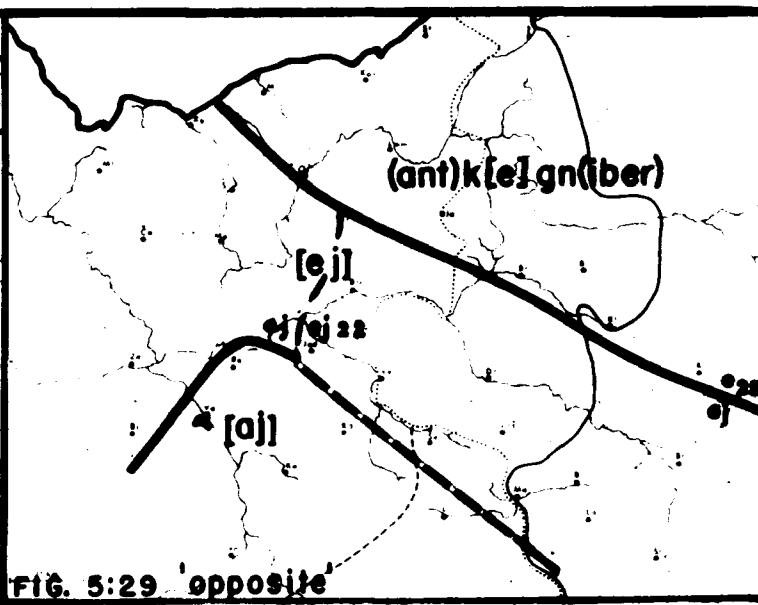
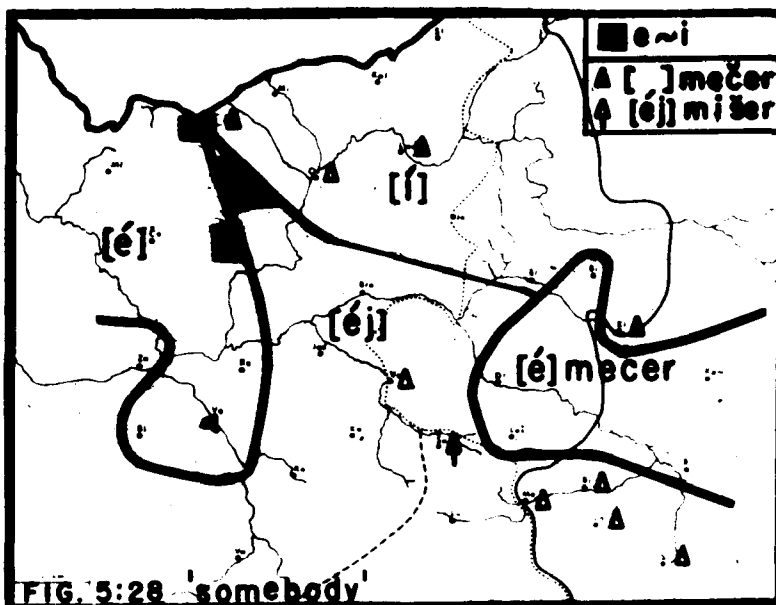
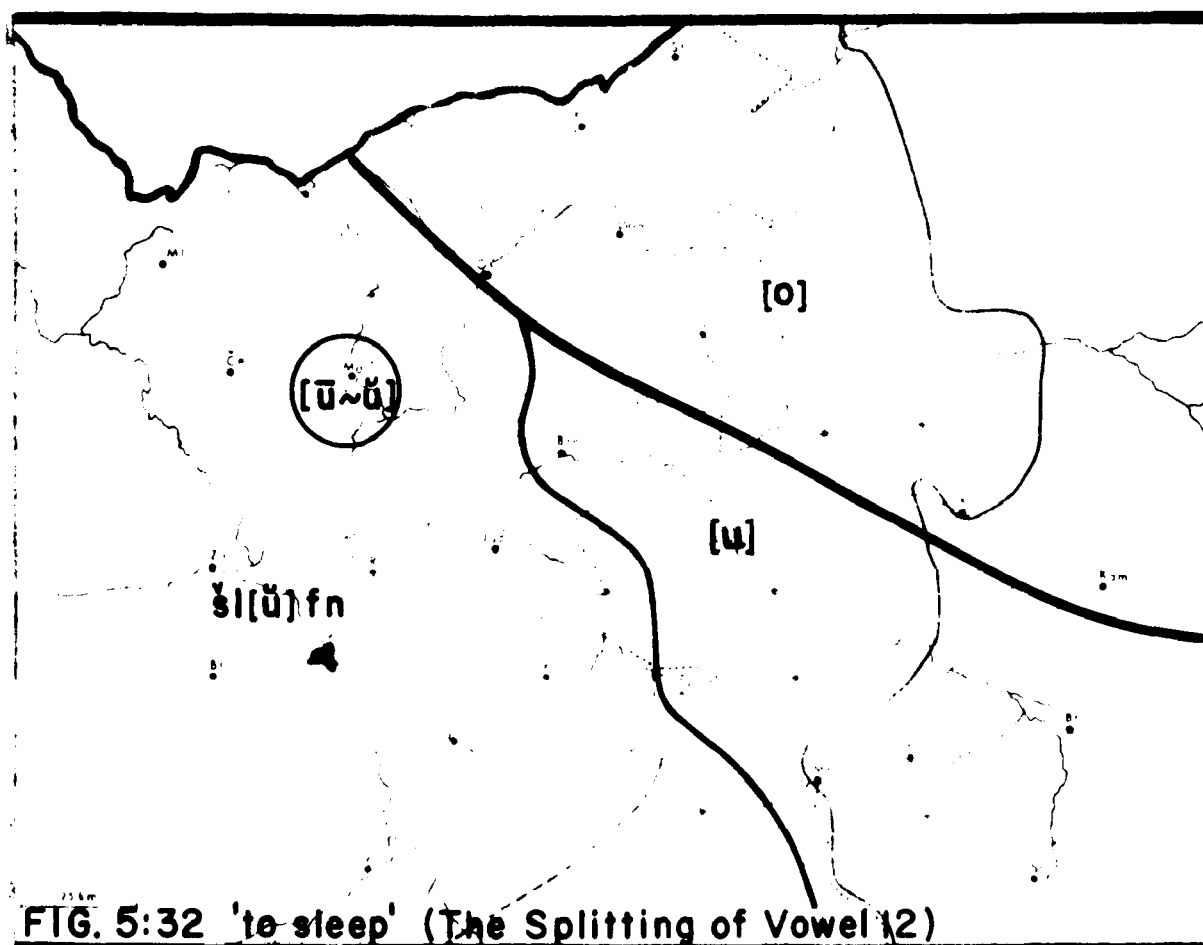
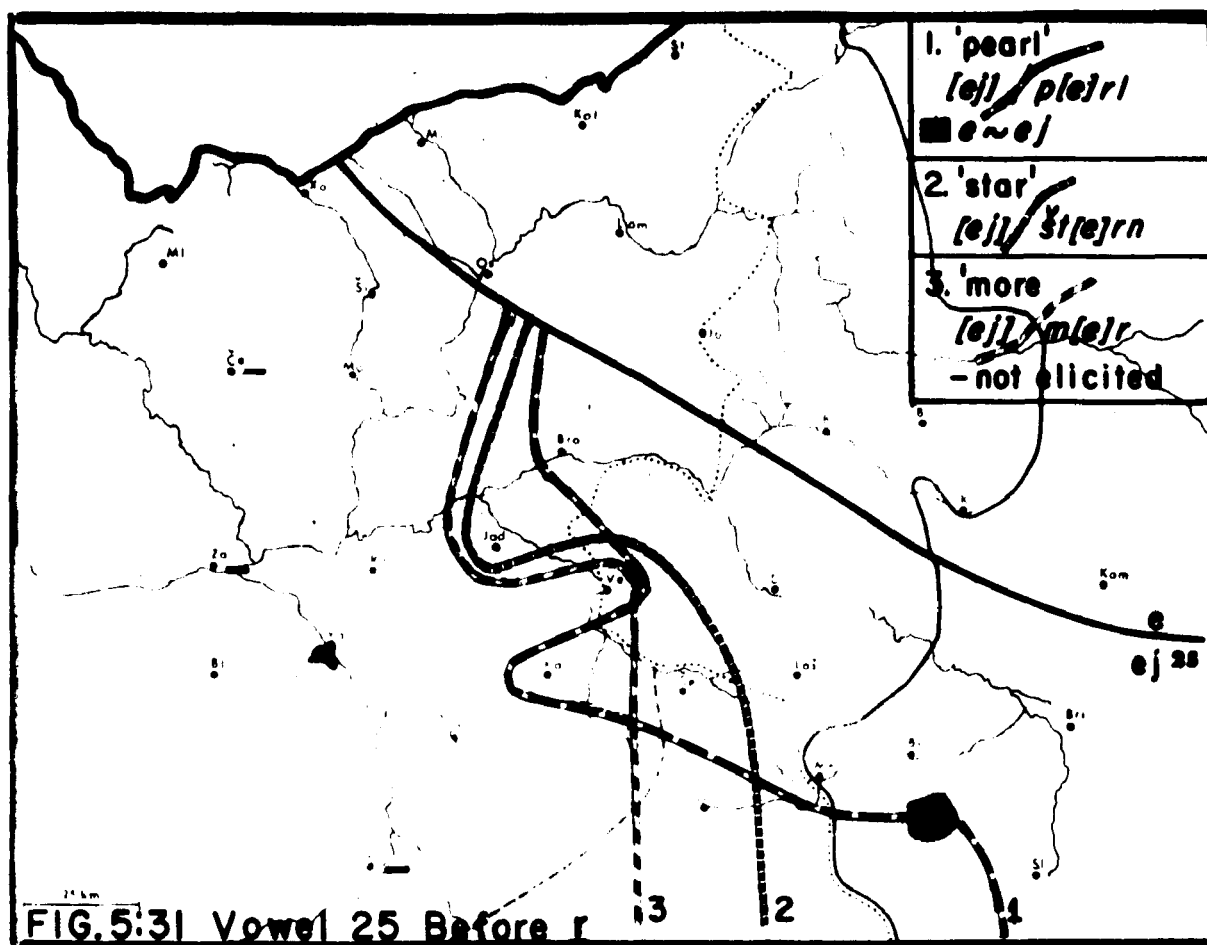


FIG. 5:28 MERGER OF INITIAL 25  
AND 32

FIGS. 5:29-5:30 CONFUSION OF  
25 AND 22



štrūfn], but each of these is of very limited distribution. Some of them are even confined to a single community (Figs. 5:33-5:36).

Another typical aspect of the development of vowel 12 in CY is its diphthongization in final syllable before the apicals d, t, s, z, n, l, and the velar fricatives r and x (Fig. 5:37). Individual lexical items display considerable variation in this respect (Figs. 5:38-5:39).

From the available data we can now state the conditions of near complementation that seem to prevail in Mákeve:

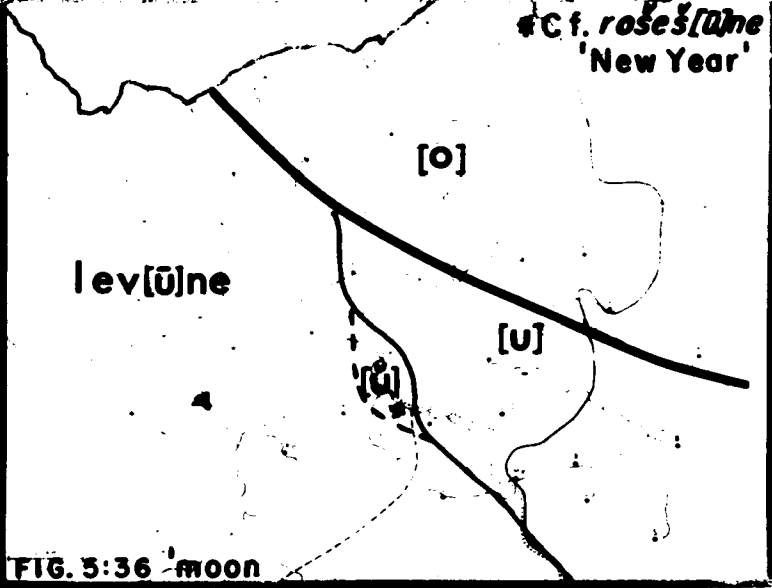
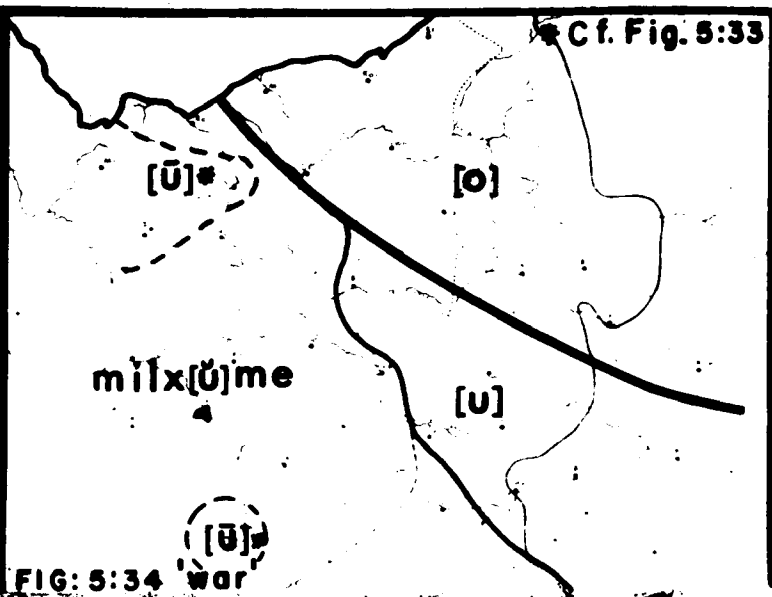
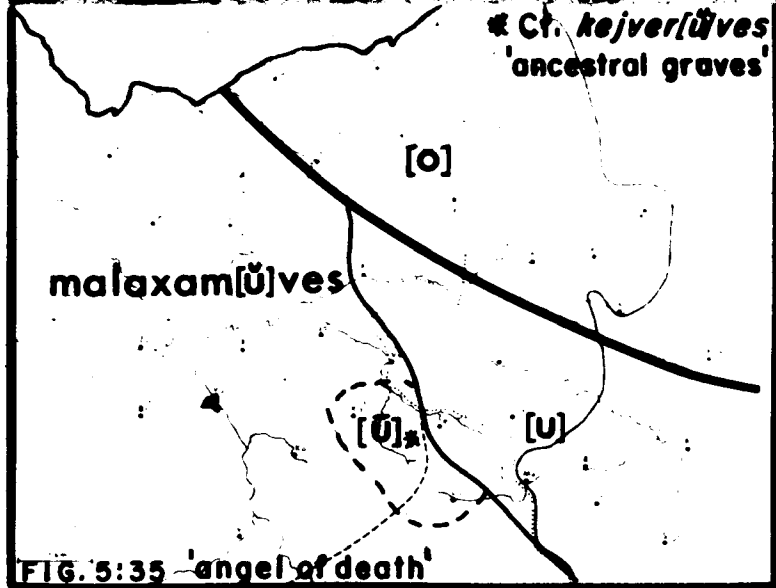
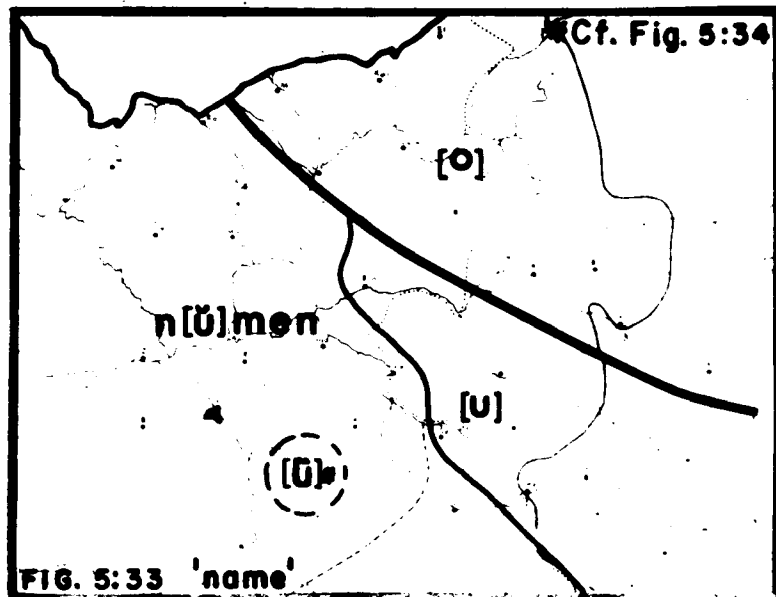
/u/₁₂: [ū] in final syllable before the cited apicals (d, t, s, z, n, l) and velar fricatives (r, x);  
[ū] in word-final position and, in non-final syllables before the cited apicals, vowels, and voiceless fricatives (except [ū ~ ū] in [šlūfn] 'to sleep';  
[ū] elsewhere.

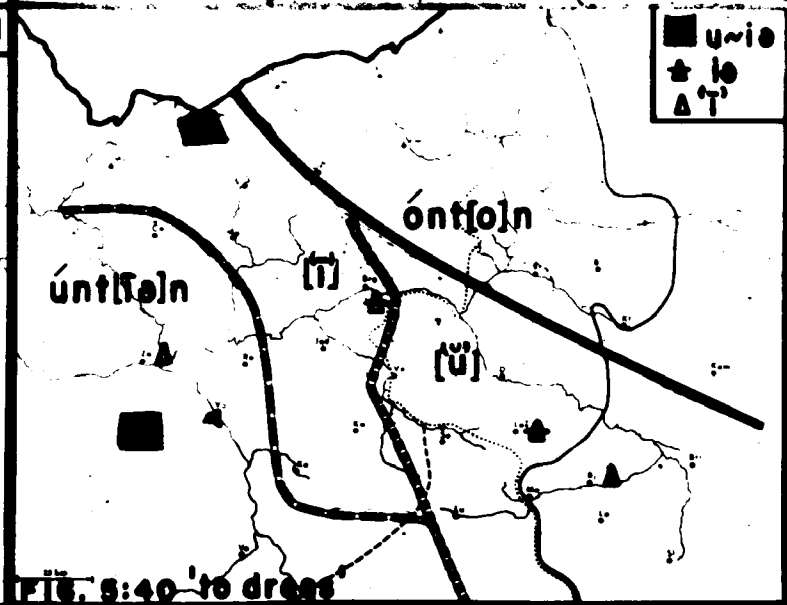
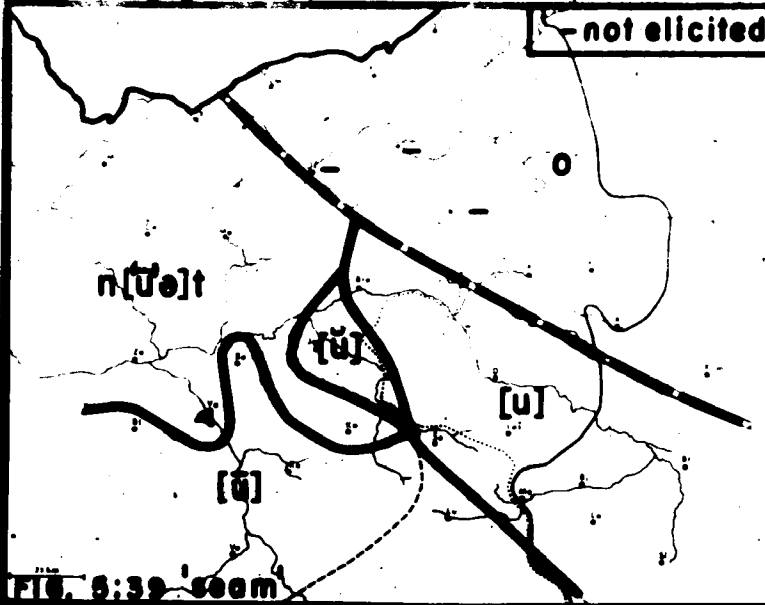
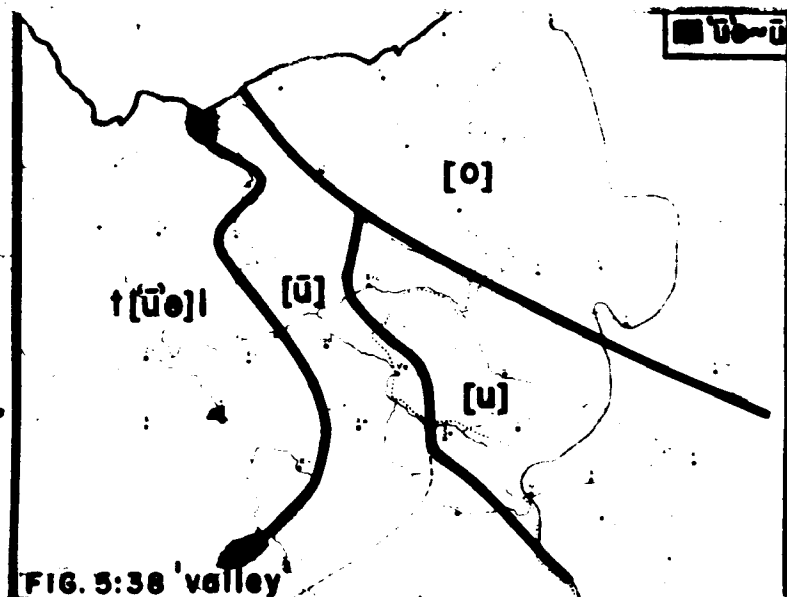
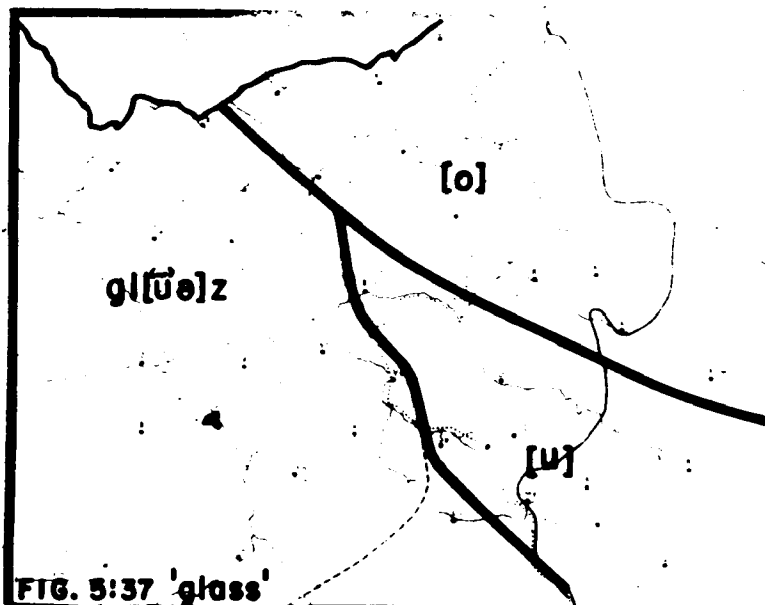
It is understood of course that the evolution of a contrast between /ū/ and /u/ could not spread beyond the boundaries of the area in which distinctive length was preserved. The border of this area is represented by the eastern limit of ā₃₄ (cf. Fig. 5:18).

The apparent deviation from the normal variation of o/u₁₂, illustrated by the three-way alternation in the stem of [(ón)ton/(ún)tun/(ún)tīn] 'to dress' (Fig. 5:40), is probably attributable to PY lexical doublets (cf. MHG tān, tuon).

5.13.4 Monophthongization of Vowel 54. When we examine its development in the entire Yiddish language area, PY uu₅₄ presents the most







complex picture of all. No single word can illustrate the typical distribution of all its regional variants. This applies equally to the distribution of positional variants within any region. Lowering first produced P(N)EY au<sub>54</sub> (see above, §5.10.2) which subsequently became PSY ou<sub>54</sub> (cf. §5.10.1).

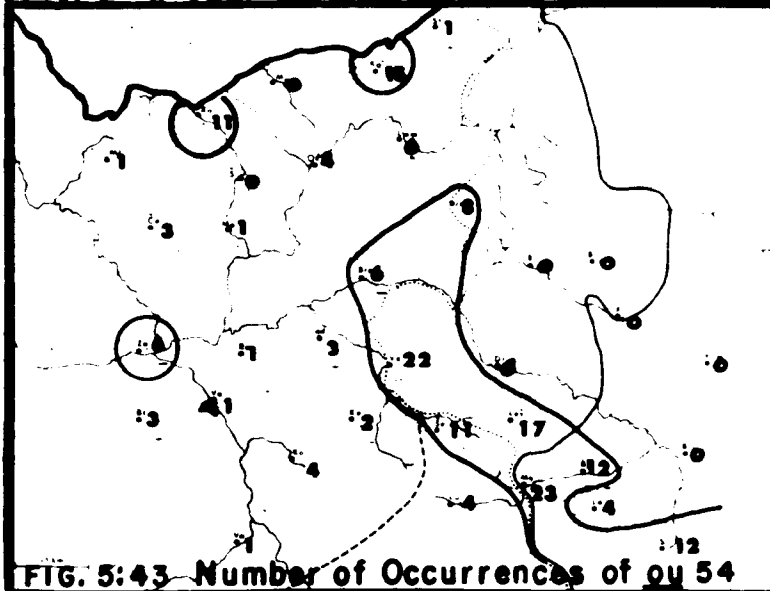
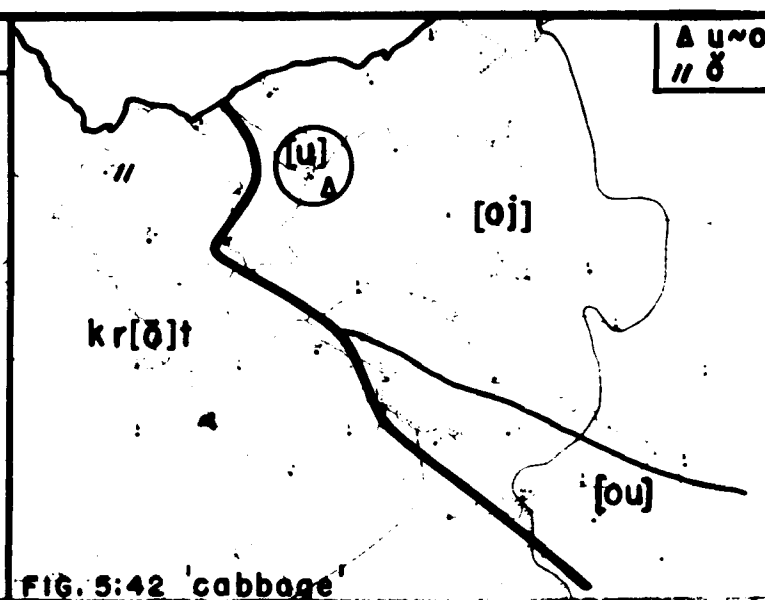
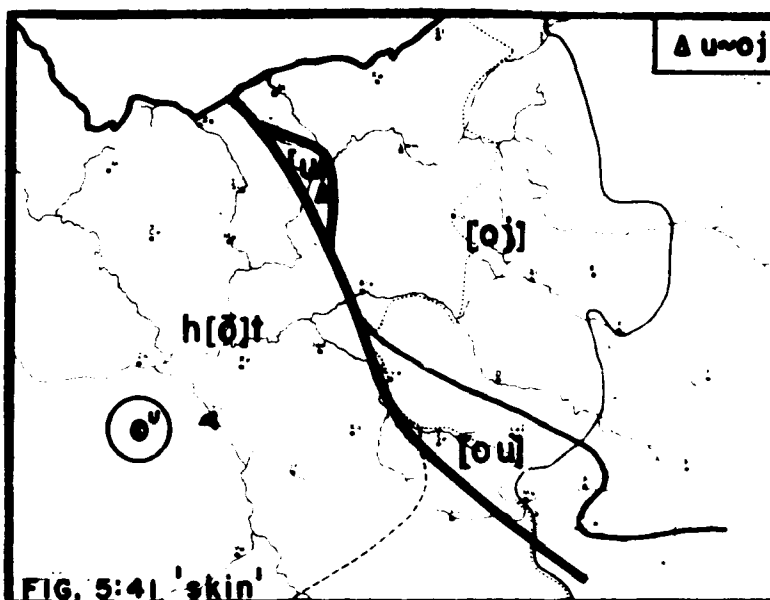
If we consider the preservation of length distinctions as criterial to the definition of CY in our area, then a single CY community (Véngreve) has consistently preserved ou<sub>54</sub>, another (Šilc) has eliminated it entirely in favor of [ō]. The remaining communities show varying degrees of retention of [ou]. The number of occurrences recorded at each location is given in Fig. 5:43.<sup>17</sup> Otherwise vowel 54, has, as a rule, been monophthongized to [ō]<sup>18</sup> (Figs. 5:41-5:42). We ignore the sporadic occurrence of secondary diphthongization (e.g. [hōæt] 'skin' comparable to the CY development of vowel 12, cf. above Fig. 5:37) and triphthongization (e.g. [houæt] 'skin'). The status of [ō] is in doubt only in Mákeve where no more than three occurrences were recorded: [hōt] 'skin', [šrōf] 'screw', [gədōrn] 'to last'. In other lexical items in Mákeve, ō<sub>54</sub> has been replaced by [oj].

There is yet another CY variant of vowel 54, short [ǒ], which may be either the result of a secondary shortening of [ō], generally before [x,s,l,m], or a positionally determined aspect of the original

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<sup>17</sup> It must not be assumed that the larger numbers in this illustration necessarily subsume all of the lexical items included in the smaller ones.

<sup>18</sup> In our CY communities that is. From Koleš in SW Poland, however, we have recorded only ou<sub>54</sub>. Note also that the development of 54 to the east, though also indicated in these illustrations, will be described below in §5.14.3 and §5.15.



# MONOPHTHONGIZATION OF VOWEL 54

monophthongization of [ou]. The latter explanation seems more plausible for chronological reasons:

If  $\underline{\text{ö}}_{54}$  were simply a consequence of contact between  $\underline{\text{ö}}_{54}$  and the wave of length elimination it would be unlikely to have emerged only in limited environments. Furthermore the emergence of CY  $\underline{\text{ö}}_{54}$  from [ou] appears to be too recent a phenomenon to have covered the non-length area (to the east) where  $\underline{\text{ö}}'_{54}$  now prevails in limited environments. The recency of the CY monophthongization is nowhere more apparent than in the inconsistent variation and distribution of [ $\underline{\text{ö}}$ ,  $\underline{\text{ö}}$ , ou]--a state of affairs that is highly suggestive of a process too young to have achieved stability. We need only examine the following illustrations (Figs. 5:44-5:50) to obtain some measure of the prevailing vacillation. (The form [ojs/ös], described as a verbal complement in Fig. 5:47, is essentially a stressed separable prefix; e.g. zix ojsruen 'to rest', er rut zix ojs 'he is resting').

We observe that  $\underline{\text{ö}}'_{54}$  enjoys the most widespread distribution before [l] and [m] (Figs. 5:48-5:50). The fact that it could even breach the boundaries of Isogloss 1 suggests the preexistence of ou<sub>54</sub> rather than [oj] in our NEY area, a fact otherwise apparent from sporadic remnants of [ou] as well as from the literature (cf. Wiener 1893).

That [o] could not have been a normal NEY variant of 54, which was only later replaced by [oj], is evident from the NEY merger of vowels 12 and 41: [mol] 'time(s)', [kol] 'voice' (CY [ $\underline{\text{m}}\underline{\text{ö}}\text{l}$ ], [ $\text{k}\underline{\text{ö}}\text{l}$ ]). Had vowel 54 been added to this amalgam, the advent of NEY oj<sub>54</sub> would

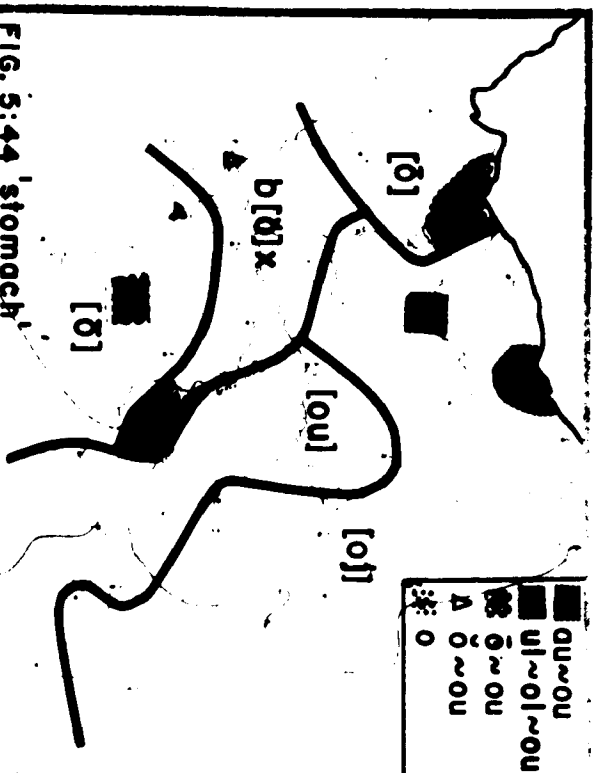


FIG. 5:44 'stomach'

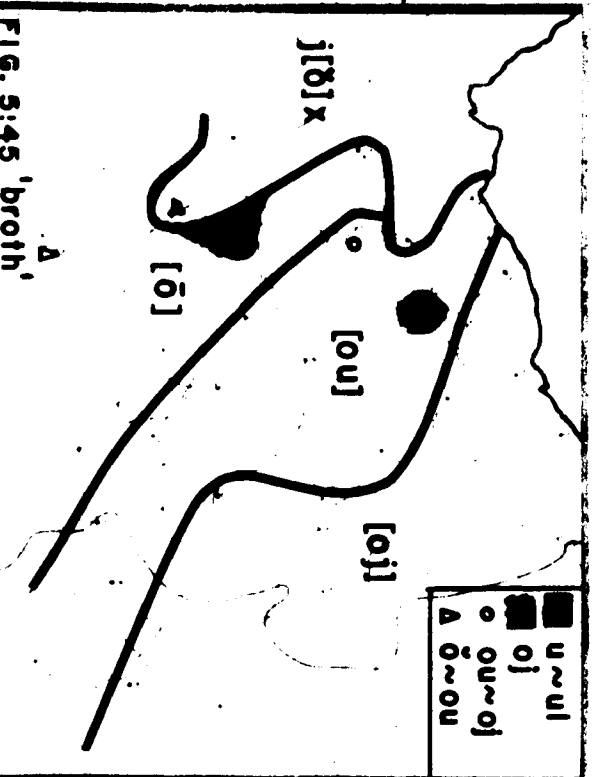


FIG. 5:45 'broth'

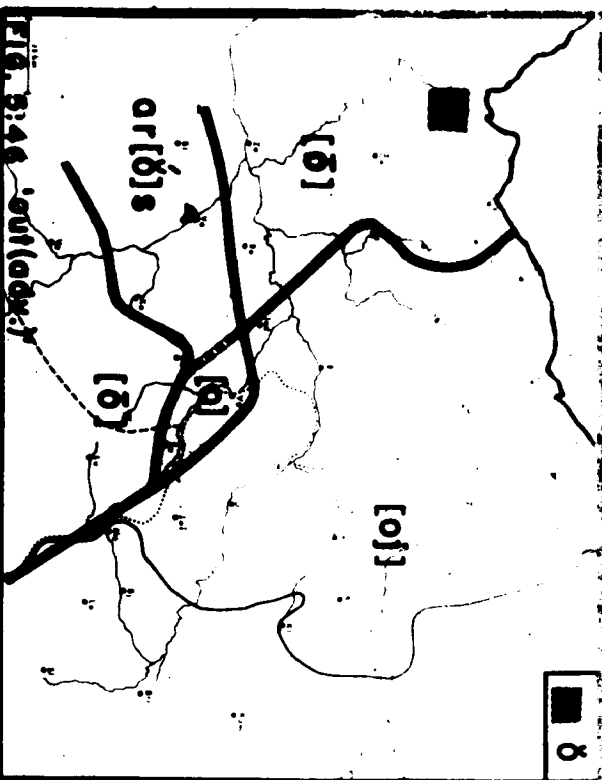


FIG. 5:46 'out(ack)'

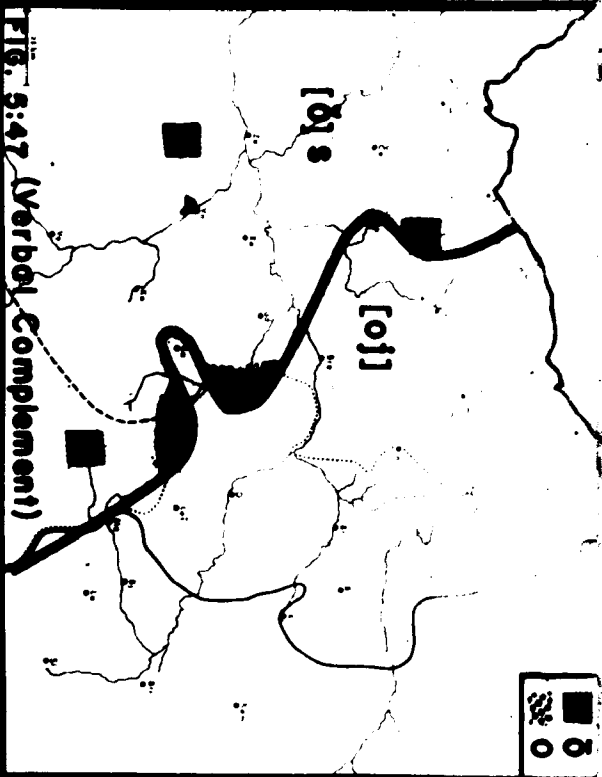
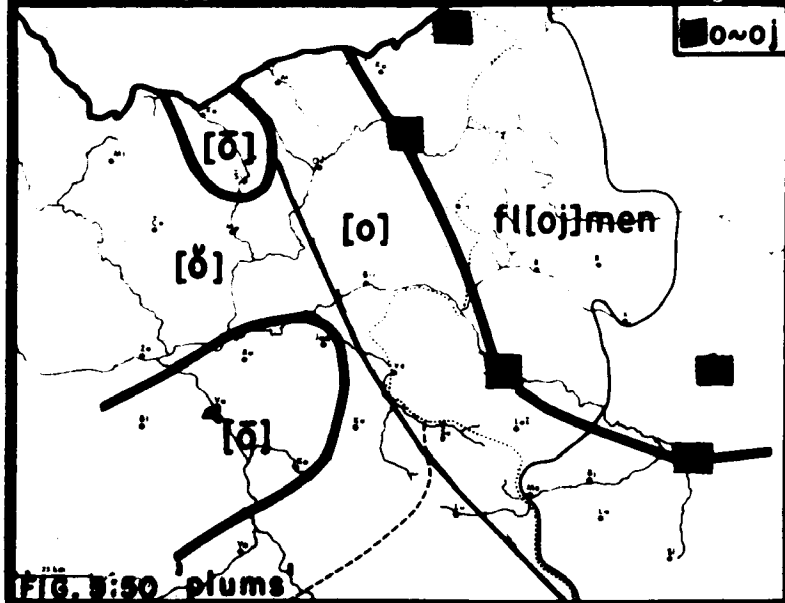
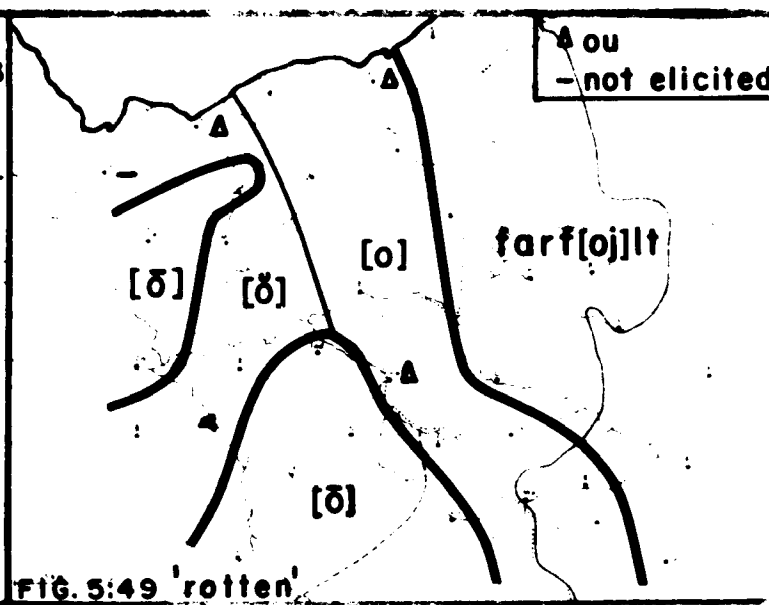
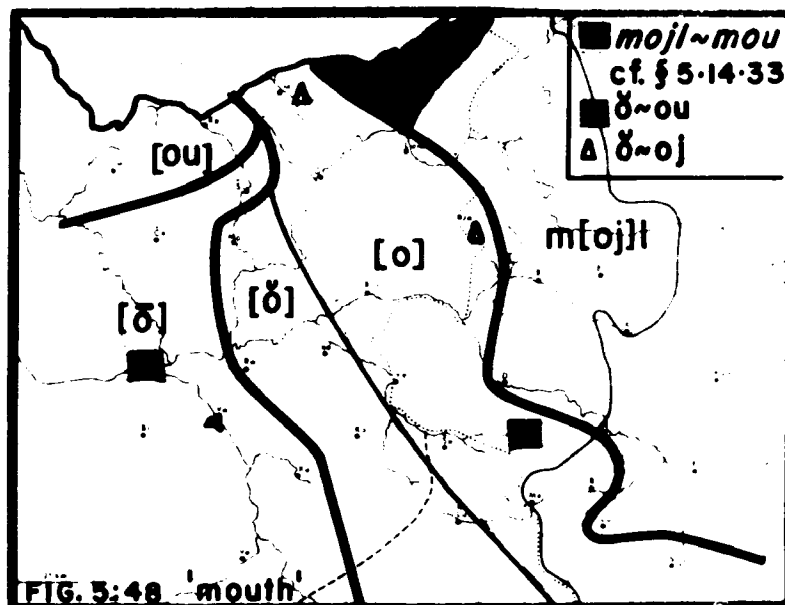


FIG. 5:47 (Verbal Complement)



VOWEL 54 BEFORE l AND m

have led to widespread hypercorrection. As it is, evidence of hypercorrection is very rare; one example was provided by the informant from Kámenec=Litóvsk, a town subject to the (54) alternation [flom/flojm] 'plum' (Fig. 5:50), who also produced [flojm] as a variant of [flom] 'flame' (Std. Yid. flam) (cf. Fig. 5:43) in an effort to be "correct".

Thus we propose that  $\underset{54}{\text{ö}}$  is a positionally determined reflex of the original CY monophthongization of Proto-SY ou<sub>54</sub>, which diffused eastward to Isogloss 1. The functional yield of the opposition  $\underset{41}{\text{ö}}$  and ou<sub>54</sub> in the designated positions ~~was~~ sufficiently low not to have acted as a deterrent to the resulting partial merger. In Table 10 we have extended the chronology of Table 9 to include all the major features of the CY development.

5.13.5 Other Features of the CY Vowel System. In the following paragraphs we consider a number of related phenomena which, though of secondary importance in the overall scheme of CY developments, are no less significant than others in their chronological implications.

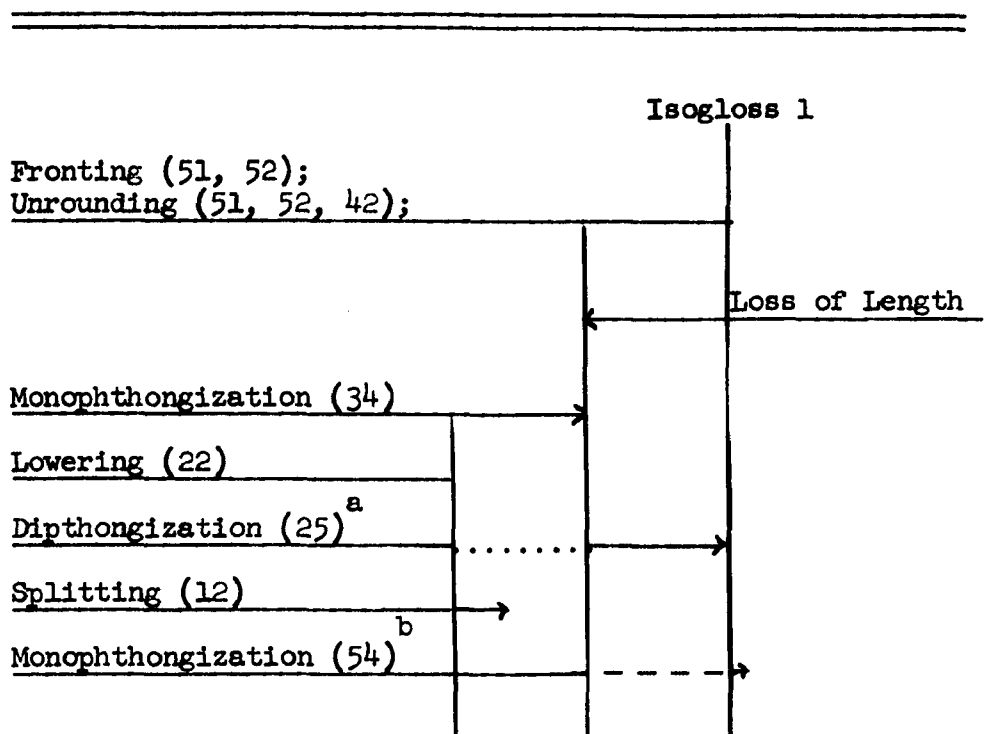
5.13.51 Differentiation of Vowels 51, 31 Before [r/x]. We have become so accustomed to the chronological primacy of the fronting-unrounding of PEY  $\underset{51}{\text{ü}}$ <sub>52</sub>, that it is unusual to discover two phenomena which, if interpreted as sound changes, must have preceded its completion. Only by considering at least one of them as representative of a prior state or event can we account for the differentiation of CY 51, 31 before [r] and [x].<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> That we need not posit actual sound change, in both cases, to account for the condition in CY, is suggested by the widespread constraints imposed by post-vocalic [r] upon the stressed vowel contrasts of many languages, especially in the Germanic family. We can easily visualize a synchronic situation in the first contacts among Yiddish dialects in some of which the system of vocalic oppositions before [r] had already been reduced.



TABLE 10  
CHRONOLOGY OF CY DEVELOPMENT

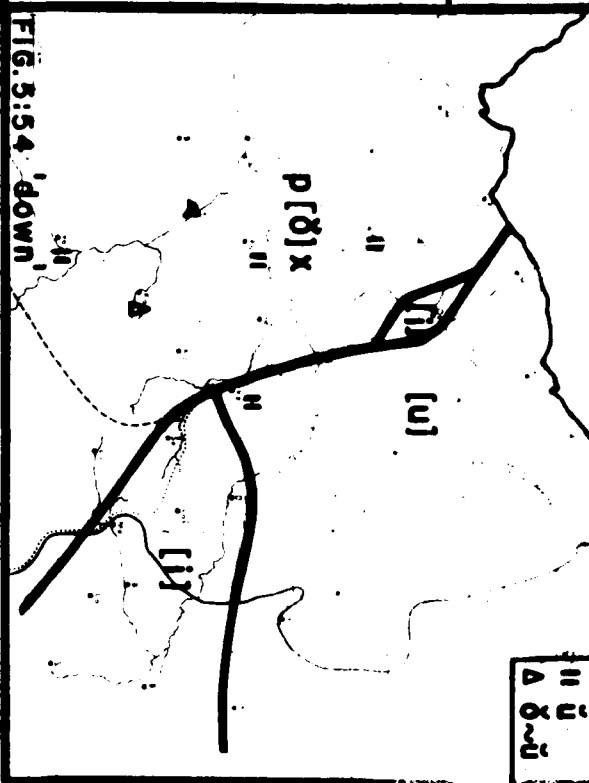
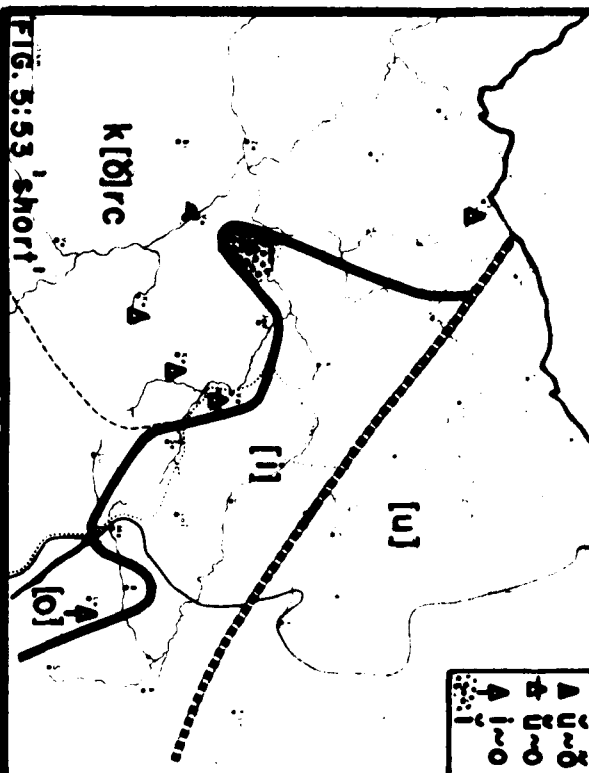
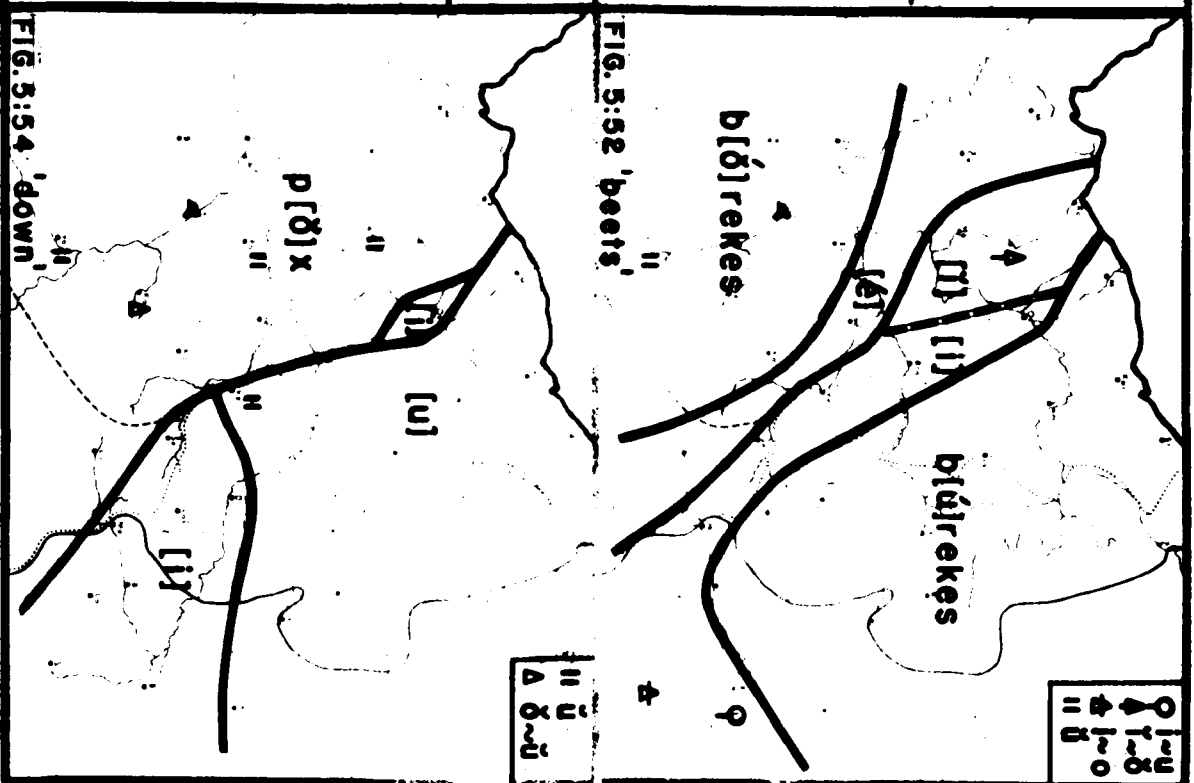
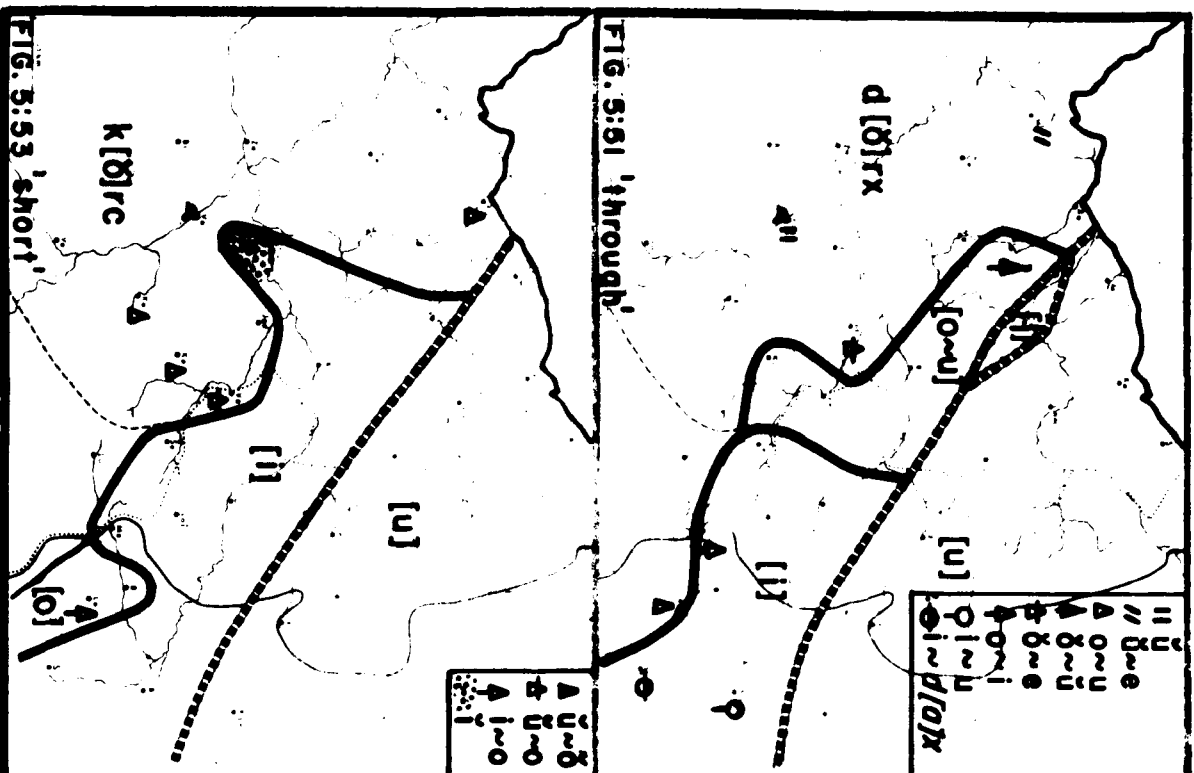


<sup>a</sup> Allowance was made for the raising of  $\bar{e}_{25}$ , prior to its diphthongization, in the area represented by the dotted line (cf. §5.13.2).

<sup>b</sup> The broken line represents the area in which only the designated positional variants of vowel 54 have been monophthongized.

5.13.511 Vowel 51 Before [r/x]. On the basis of the geographic location of the variants in Figs. 5:51-5:54 we can posit the chronological primacy of the described phenomena over the PSY merger of vowels 31, 51. We take Fig. 5:52 'beets' as the most revealing. We assume from the nature and distribution of the variants that contact was first established between dialects which had lost the distinction between ur- and or- sequences and others which had not.<sup>20</sup> We assume that at this

<sup>20</sup> Although apparently all of them had been affected by the merger to some extent; see for example Std. Yid. nor 'only' (MHG muor).



stage the variant [búrekəs] 'beets' (Pol. burak) covered the entire area to the west of [búrekəs] (cf. adjoining [o/u] variants in Fig. 5:51). The first displacement of [o] would then have occurred with the development of [bírekəs] approximately along the isogloss  $\bar{u}_{51} \bar{u}_{52}$  (cf. Fig. 5:53)--this in accordance with the normalizing "folk-etymological" process described in §5.12.1. The efficacy of this process is further evident from the emergence of [bérekəs] on the model of [-ir] > [-er] (§5.13.512).

Thus, while we have considered the alternation of -or- / - $\bar{u}$ r- as a feature of a "given" synchronic state, the corresponding alternation in the front vowels appears to be more in the nature of a sound change -ir- > -er-.<sup>21</sup> This change need not have preceded the unrounding of  $\bar{y}_{51} \bar{y}_{52}$  since  $\bar{y}_{51}$  before [r] had already merged with [o]. The plausibility of our explanation is strengthened by the fact that neither [i], lying geographically between [u] and [e], nor [e], between [i] and [o], can be considered articulatory "compromises" between the surrounding variants.

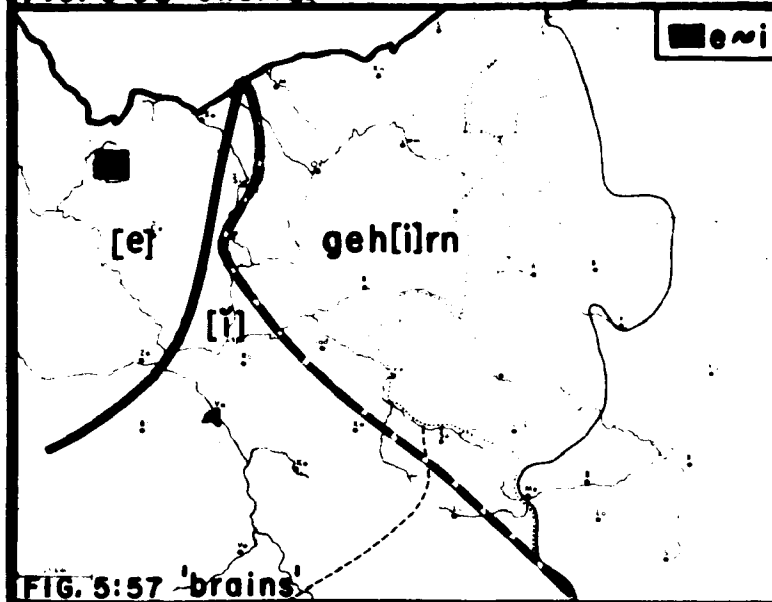
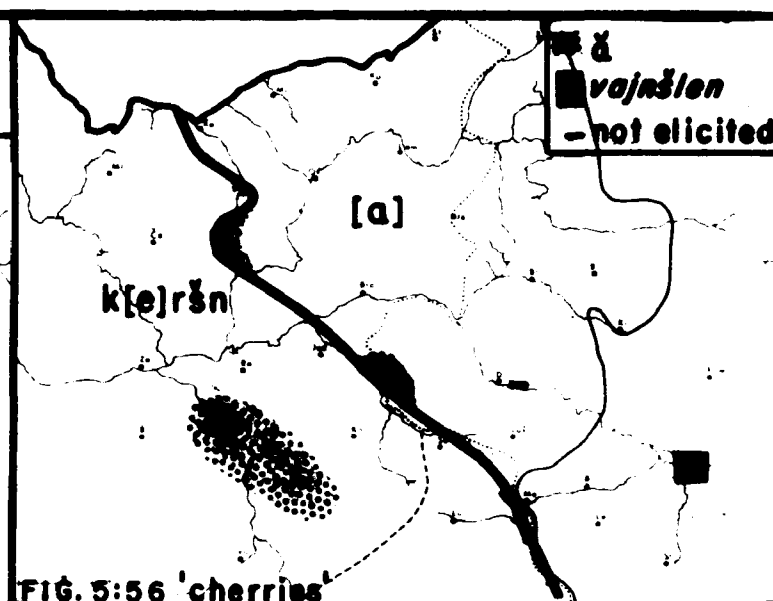
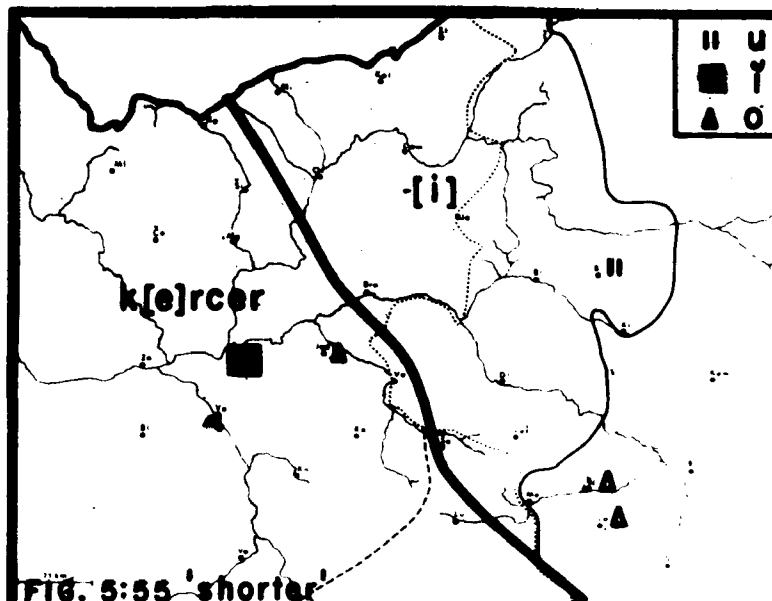
5.13.512 Lowering of Vowel 31 Before [r/x]. Figs. 5:55-5:57 illustrate the typical SY development of P(S)(E)Y  $\bar{y}_{31}$ , before [r]: [kerçər] 'shorter'<sup>22</sup>, [keršn] 'cherries', [gehern] 'brains'. In Fig. 5:56 an even more extreme development in the eastern form [karšn] suggests that at least this lexical item in its [-er-] form was at one time more widespread.<sup>22a</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> On the process ir > er in German cf. Zirmunskij (1962:239f.). For the change of Polish i and u before r to ę see Urbańczyk (1962:20).

<sup>22</sup> The sporadic occurrences of [o] and [u] in Fig. 5:55 must be the result of analogy with the local form of the positive 'short' (cf. Fig. 5:53 above).

<sup>22a</sup> On the process er > ar see below §5.13.52.



VOWEL 31 BEFORE r

No less typical of CY is the lowering of 3l before [x]<sup>23</sup> (Fig. 5:58 [lɛxt] 'candle'; Fig. 5:59 [kɛx] 'kitchen'<sup>24</sup>).

5.13.52 Vowel 2l before [r]. PY ě<sub>21</sub> is typically [e] in all present-day dialects. A number of lexical items, however, some of them universal in their distribution, appear to be vestiges of an old process which yielded [-ar-] < [-er-]; thus Std.Yid. štarbn 'to die', varfn 'to throw', fartik 'ready' (MHG stērbēn, wērfen, vertic). In parts of Poland<sup>25</sup> the phenomenon is still manifest, and every normal [e] before both [r] and [x] is typically lowered to [ǣ]. In our sample communities, however, it is directly evident only in Warsaw where efforts to eliminate its sometimes embarrassing consequences (e.g. [farcn] < [fercn] 'fourteen'; [farcn] 'to break wind') frequently lead to hypercorrection. We are inclined to attribute the [e] variants in Figs. 5:60-5:61: [ferfl] 'pellets of dough',<sup>26</sup> [fertik] 'ready', precisely to the attempt of neighboring communities to avoid this easily identifiable provincialism.

Given the multi-directional pressures ir > er > ar > er,

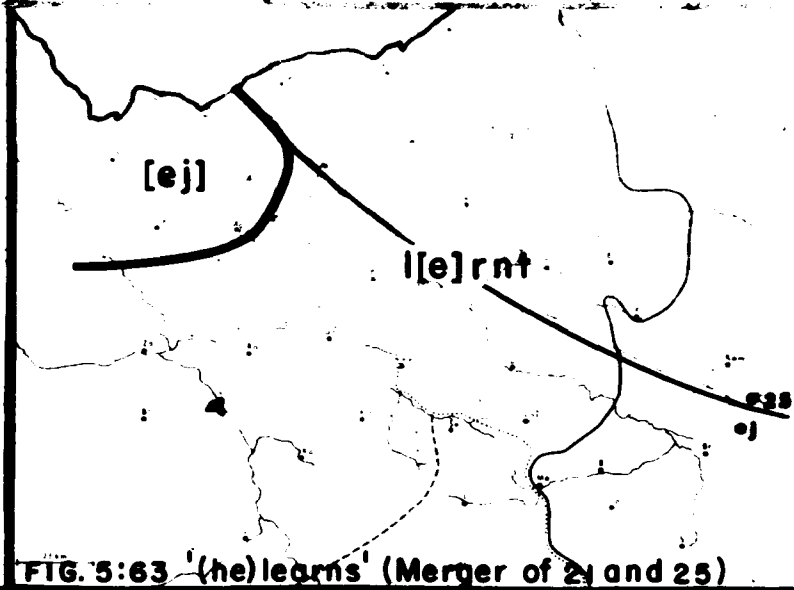
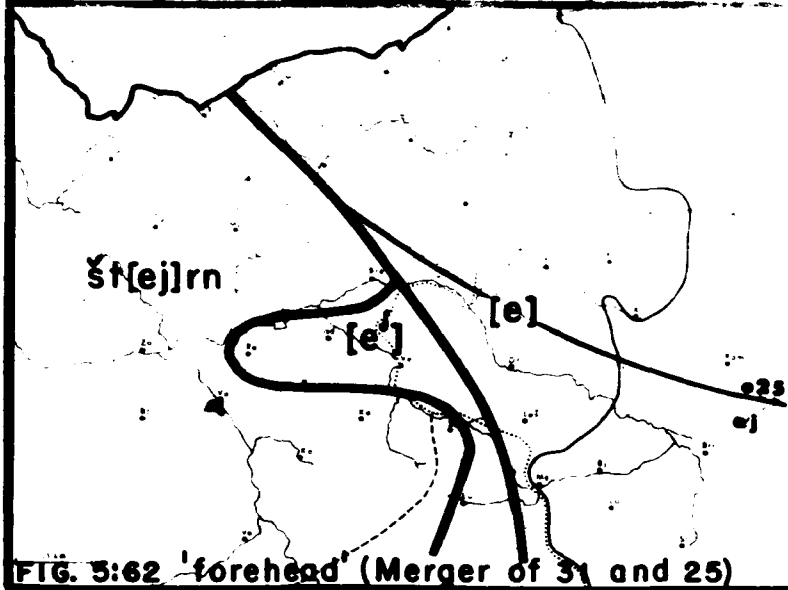
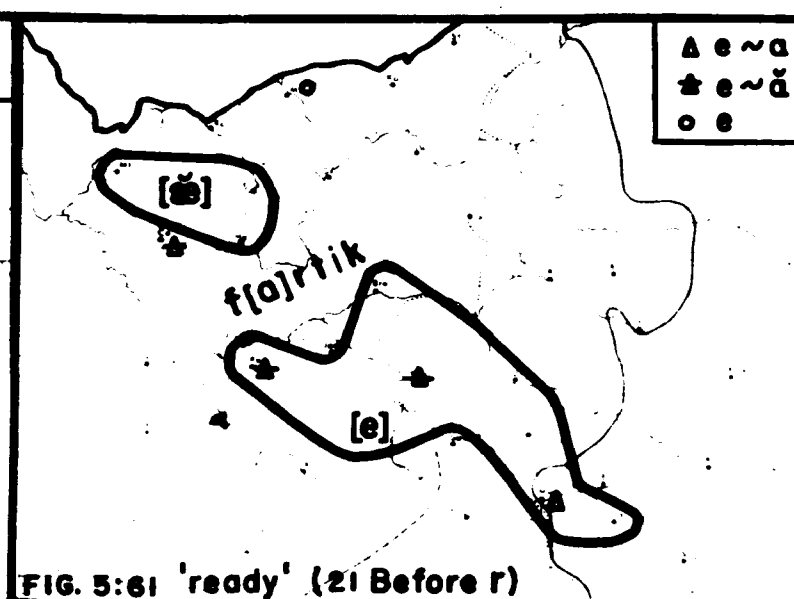
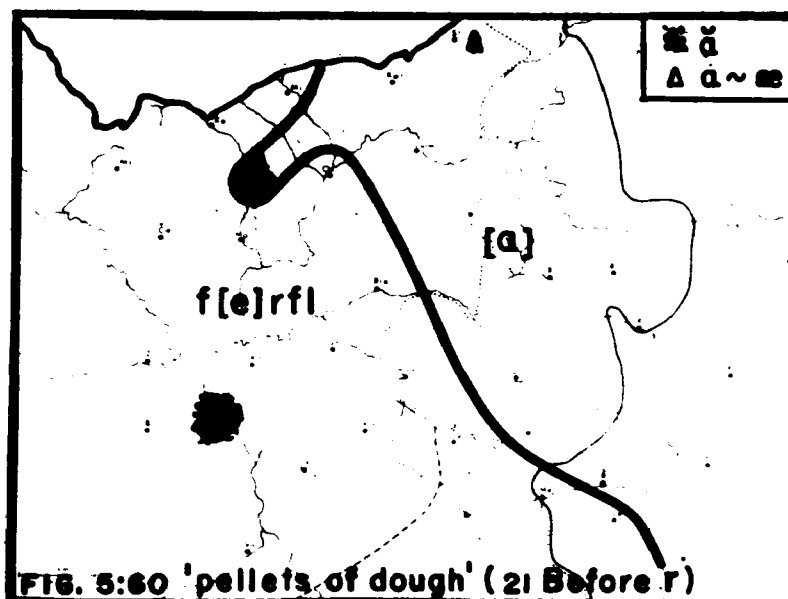
<sup>23</sup>The fact that [r] and [x] impose the same constraints upon preceding vowel contrasts suggests that the velar quality of ɣ in the affected areas is of considerable age in Yiddish.

<sup>24</sup>It is likely that the variant [kǣx] reflects the influence of Pol. *kuchnia* 'kitchen, range'. On the other hand, [kǣx], in Warsaw, is the product of the further lowering of 3l along with 2l before [x] (cf. §5.13.52).

<sup>25</sup>In our own investigation only in Xmełnik far to the south.

<sup>26</sup>On the manner of their preparation see Fig. 2:2.





it is not surprising to find some contamination of vowels 31, 21, and 25 before r. A merger of vowels 31 and 21 was evident in the variants of Fig. 5:56: [keršn/karšn] 'cherries' (MHG kirse, kērse). In Fig. 5:62, vowels 31 and 25 seem to have merged: [štern/štejrn] 'forehead' (MHG stirne), while Fig. 5:63 suggests a merger of vowels 25 and 21: [lejrnt/lernt] '(he) learns' (cf. MHG lërnen).

#### 5.14 Fresh Innovations from the NE: Further Evolution of NEY

5.14.1 Loss of Length. Second only to the failure of fronting (51, 52) to penetrate its borders, the loss of distinctive vowel length is the most striking feature of NEY. It has been the object of considerable comment by other investigators (cf. Wiener 1893, Sapir 1915, Jakobson 1953, U. Weinreich 1954, 1958a, b, and now 1963).

The most apparent consequences of this development in NEY are easily portrayed:

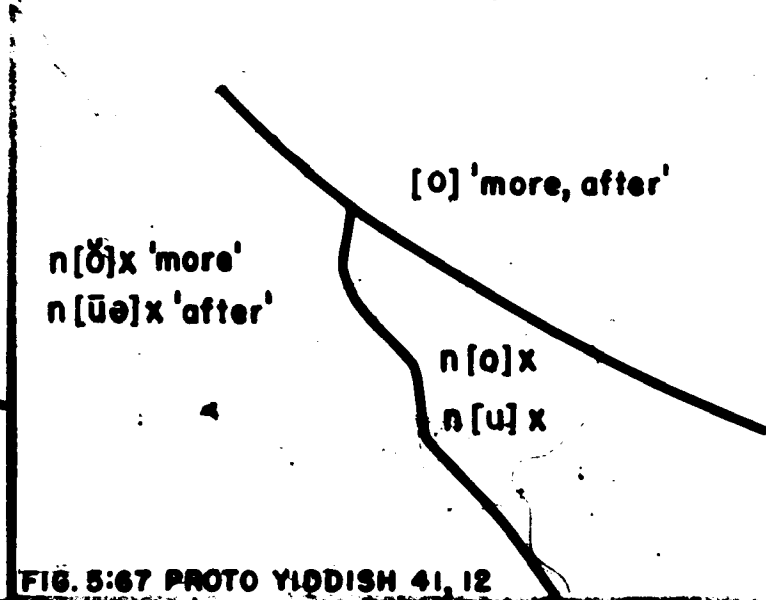
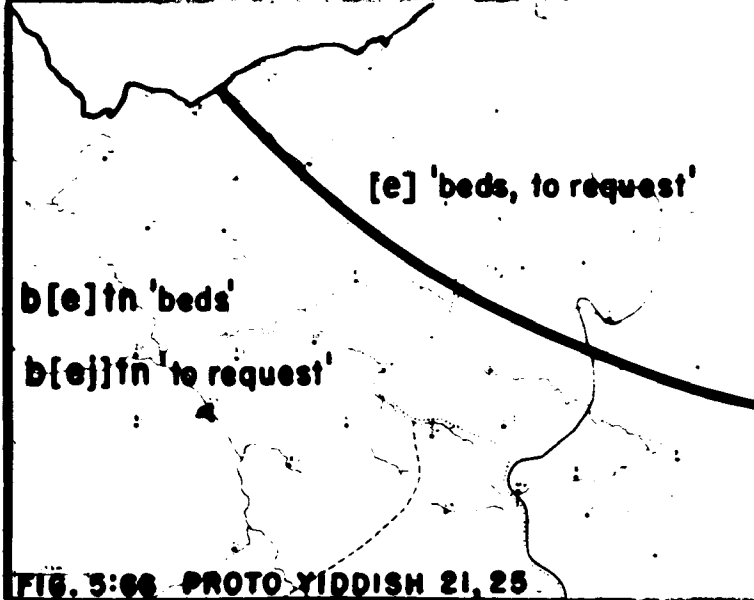
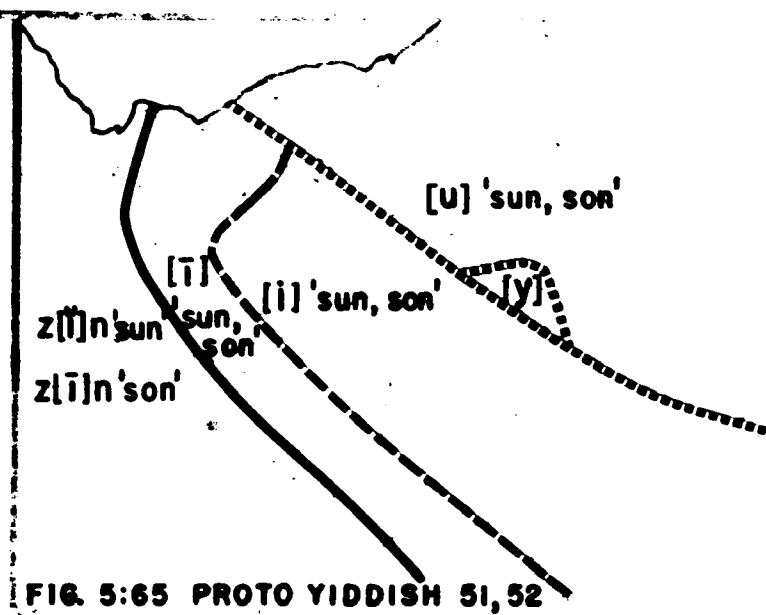
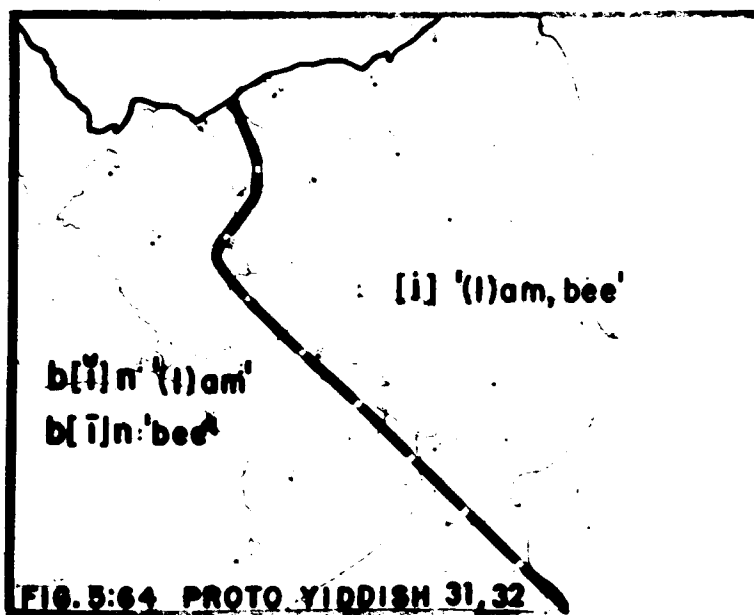
<u>NEY</u>	<u>NCY</u>	<u>CY</u>
31, 32 [bin] '(I) am, bee'	[bin]	[bĭn] [bīn] (Fig. 5:64)
51, 52 [zun] 'sun, son'	[zin]	[zĭn] [zīn] (Fig. 5:65) <sup>27</sup>
21, 25 [betn] 'beds, to request	[betn] [bejtn]	[betn][bejtn] (Fig. 5:66)
41, 12 [nox] 'more, after'	[nox][nux]	[nōx] [nūəx] (Fig. 5:67)

A more precise picture of length versus non-length areas, however, requires additional data:

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<sup>27</sup> The portrayed merger of vowels 31, 32 in part of the CY area will be discussed in §5.15.





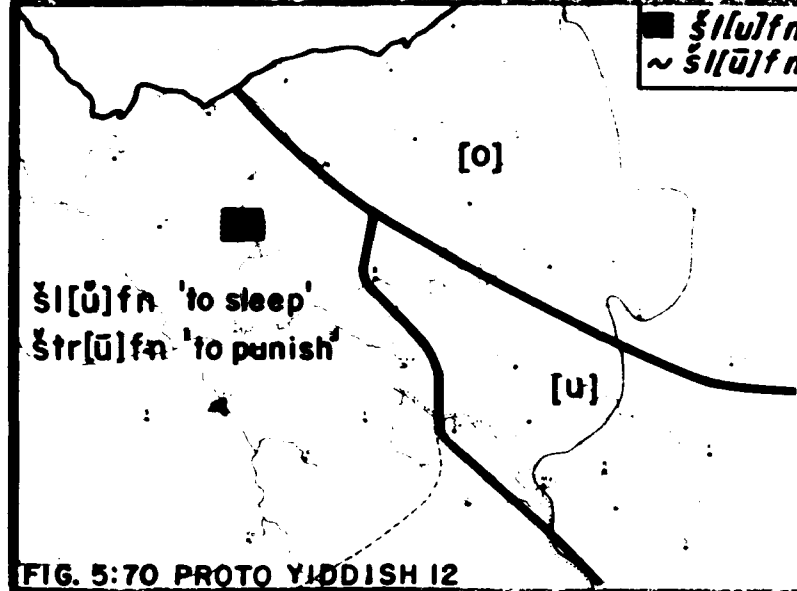
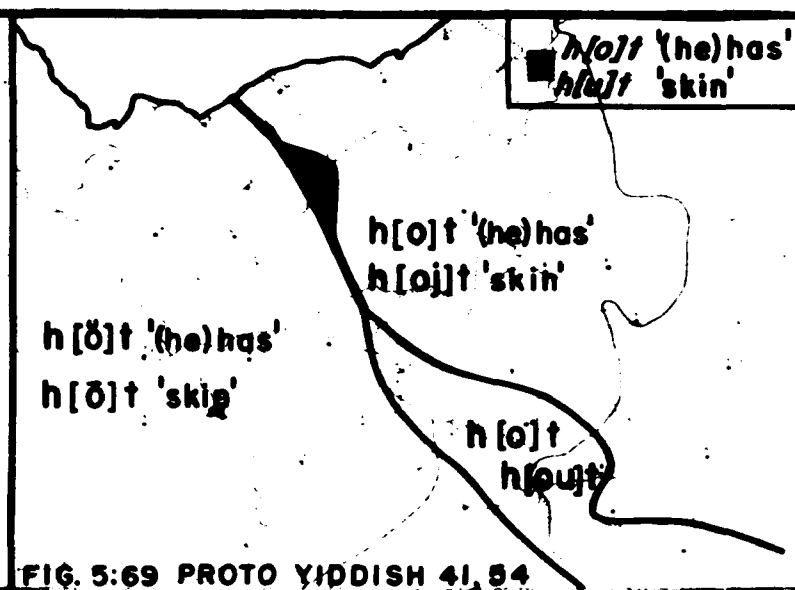
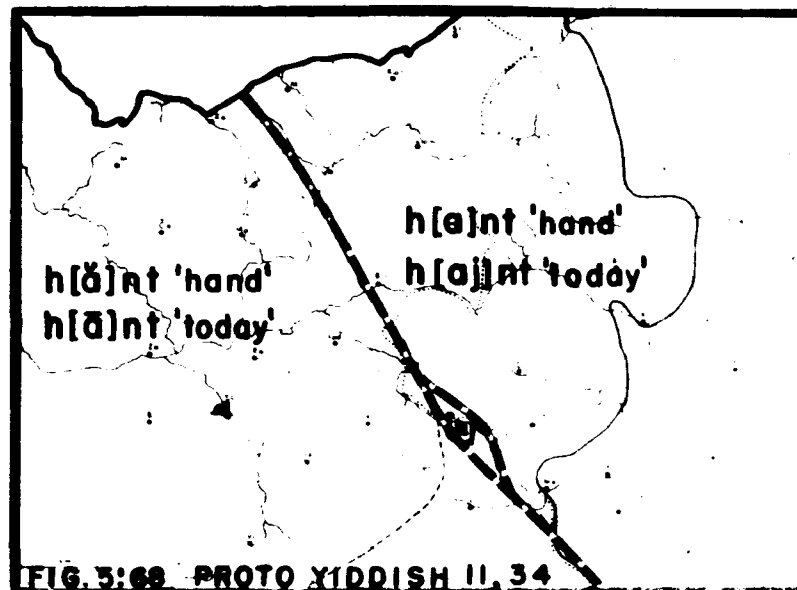
<u>CY</u>		<u>Elsewhere</u>
11 [hǎnt] 'hand'	34 [hānt] 'today'	[hant] [hajnt] (Fig. 5:68)
41 [hǒt] '(he) has'	54 [hōt] 'skin'	[hot] [hout/hojt] (Fig. 5:69)
12 [šlūfn] 'to sleep'	12 [štrūfn] 'to punish'	[šlufn/štrufn] [šlofn/štrofn] (Fig. 5:70)

From these illustrations it is abundantly clear that the loss of length, diffusing southwestward, overran the territory of a number of CY innovations diffusing northeastward or, alternately, prevented some of them from doing so.

In correlating the chronologies of SY and CY changes (Tables 9 and 10) we proposed that the length-elimination wave overflowed the borders of NEY after the SY fronting of PEY  $\bar{u}_{51\ 52}$  and raising of PEY  $\bar{o}_{12}$ . Let us now briefly weigh the possibility of placing the loss of length at some other point in the development instead.

The loss of distinctive length produced a merger of  $\bar{o}_{41\ 12}$  in NEY (Fig. 5:67). If raising had followed this merger, it would either have omitted  $\bar{o}_{12}$  in the overlap area or included  $\bar{o}_{41}$ . Since it did neither, our chart is correct in positing the raising of PEY  $\bar{o}_{12}$  as a SY innovation that preceded the loss of length in the intermediate area.

Furthermore, had the loss of length not been diffused into the transition area, as proposed, prior to the CY monophthongization of PEY  $\underline{aj}_{34}$ , there would have been no reason for CY  $\bar{a}_{34} < [aj]$ , or the subsequent lowering of  $\underline{ej}_{22} > [aj]$ , to have stopped where they did. We have no substantial evidence for assuming, to the contrary, that their present locations are the result of a retreat. On this



LENGTH VS. NON-LENGTH  
AREAS

point too, therefore, the chronological sequence proposed in Table 10 is supported by geography.

From the very first, scholars have viewed the loss of length in NEY as evidence of Slavic influence (e.g. Wiener 1893:45, Sapir 1915:255). U. Weinreich has recently shown (1963) that, while there is no question of attributing the Yiddish phenomenon to a non-Slavic source, Wiener and Sapir arrived at their conclusions far too facilely. Familiar only with NEY, both ignored the fact that distinctive length had been preserved elsewhere in the language.

The essence of the problem posed by Weinreich (op. cit.) is that, in several areas (Poland, Carpathorussia and Transylvania), Yiddish has preserved the length feature while the coteritorial languages have not; in other areas (Lithuania and Latvia) where the coteritorial languages have preserved vocalic length, Yiddish has not. Such blatant lack of agreement must be accounted for whenever coteritorial coincidence (of e.g. non-length in Belorussia, the Ukraine, Bessarabia, and Moldavia, or of length in Hungary, W. Austria, and Slovakia) is advanced as the cause of innovations or survivals in Yiddish.

In dealing with the specific problem at hand, Weinreich argues that the NEY phenomenon may be attributed to contact with East Slavic languages which lacked vowel length from the 12th century; at the same time, however, he looks for specific events in the history of the Jewish communities in Poland which helped to preserve the distinctive feature of length in CY even after Polish lost it early

in the 16th century.<sup>28</sup>

Now our own historical investigations have shown (cf. Chap. 6) that NEY and CY communities, after a long period of isolation, came into direct contact in the intermediate area. We can see at once that, having lost the length feature, immigrants from the northeast would have been unable to restore it with any etymological consistency by imitation of their new neighbors. At the same time, however, there was no deep structural deterrent to their adopting the front unrounded  $\underline{i}_{51\ 52}$ , half unrounded  $\underline{o}j_{42}$  and raised  $\underline{u}_{12}$  --innovations characteristic of the speech of SY settlers whom they encountered in the transition area.

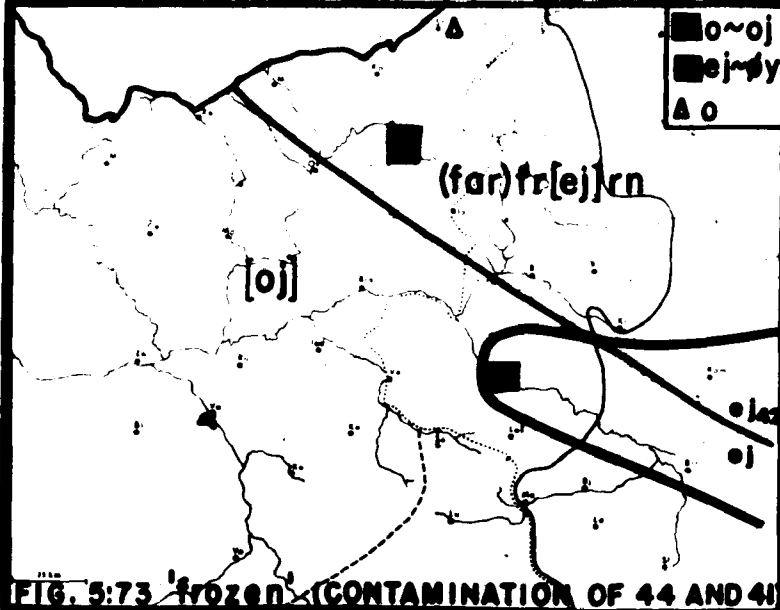
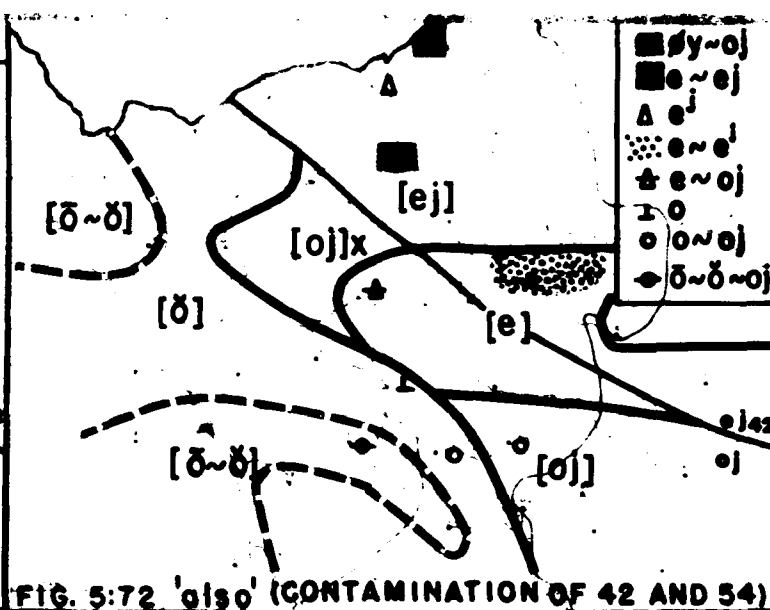
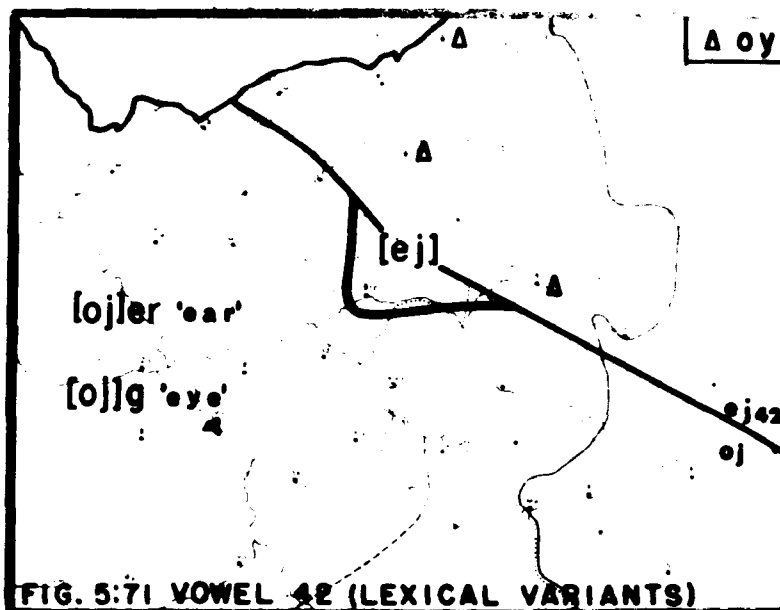
5.14.2 Unrounding of 42. While the PEY diphthong  $\phi y_{42}$  was only half-unrounded in CY, full unrounding to [ej] characterizes NEY in our area. Elsewhere some varieties of NEY have retained 42 in its rounded form.

In §5.12.22 we illustrated the distribution of the regional variants (Fig. 5:13). The line between them is practically coincident with Isogloss 1. Two lexical deviations have been recorded in which the NEY [ej] variant appears in one community, Brok, to the west of Isogloss 1 (Fig. 5:71) (Note also the sporadic occurrence of the rounded  $[\phi y]$  observed previously in Figs. 5:23-5:24.).

The two diverge only at Ostrelenke. Otherwise it is not at

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<sup>28</sup>"The retention of the length feature in Yiddish was reinforced by the continuing replenishment of the Jewish communities [in Poland] by immigrants from Germany, Bohemia, and Moravia, who spoke W. Yiddish with well established length distinctions" (U. Weinreich 1963:100).



## VOWEL 42: LEXICAL DEVIATIONS

all likely that NEY ej<sub>42</sub> ever extended westward. There would have been no structural reason for its replacement by [oj] nor would such replacement have been possible without at the same time involving ej<sub>22 25</sub>.

There are several interesting deviations from the expected alternations of vowel 42 (Figs. 5:72-5:73). In Fig. 5:72 the alternation between NEY [ejx/ex] 'also' and adjoining [ojx] is clearly typical of 42 (44)<sup>29</sup> (cf. MHG ouch, öch). Are the CY alternants [ōx/ox] the result of reinterpreting [oj] to the east as vowel 54, (cf. Fig. 5:44) or does [ōx] represent unusual secondary lengthening of 41 (cf. MHG och)? The problem is more easily posed than solved.

We fare little better with Fig. 5:73. The variation [(far-/ge-)-frojrn/-frejrn (vern)] 'to freeze up' is typical of vowel 42 (cf. MHG vm̄reh, p.p. gevm̄ert vi.).<sup>30</sup> The third alternant [-frorn] suggests, however, a proto-form with vowel 41 ([o] in closed syllable). We can account for this only on the basis of two assumptions: first that there has been a merger in Yiddish of the transitive and intransitive forms of the verb<sup>31</sup> (cf. MHG vriesen vt., p.p. gēvrorn and vm̄ern vi., p.p. gevm̄ert) and second, that while postconsonantal nasals, if not followed by a vowel constitute separate syllables in Yiddish, the preceding consonant must sometimes be considered, historically, as syllable closing.

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<sup>29</sup> Compare this instance of [ej] > [e] before [x] with Fig. 5:23.

<sup>30</sup> The regional distribution of the verbal prefixes far-/ge- was illustrated in Fig. 3:21.

<sup>31</sup> A similar merger was illustrated in §3.11 (Fig. 3:4).

In the same category as [-frojr̥n/-frejr̥n/-froɾn] we find [geboɟr̥n/gəbejr̥n/gəborn] 'born' (MHG geborn) and [farlojr̥n/farlorn] but no instances of \*farlejr̥n 'lost' (MHG verlorn).

Turning back somewhat, we will recall a type of disturbance in the regular alternation of vowel 22 which, we suggested (§5.13.1), might have been morphologically induced (cf. Figs. 5:23-5:25). We can now see that an alternative explanation for the emergence of [oj] forms in the area between aj<sub>22</sub> and ej<sub>22</sub> is easily explained in terms of the reinterpretation, by SY speakers in the transition area, of NEY ej<sub>22</sub> as 42.

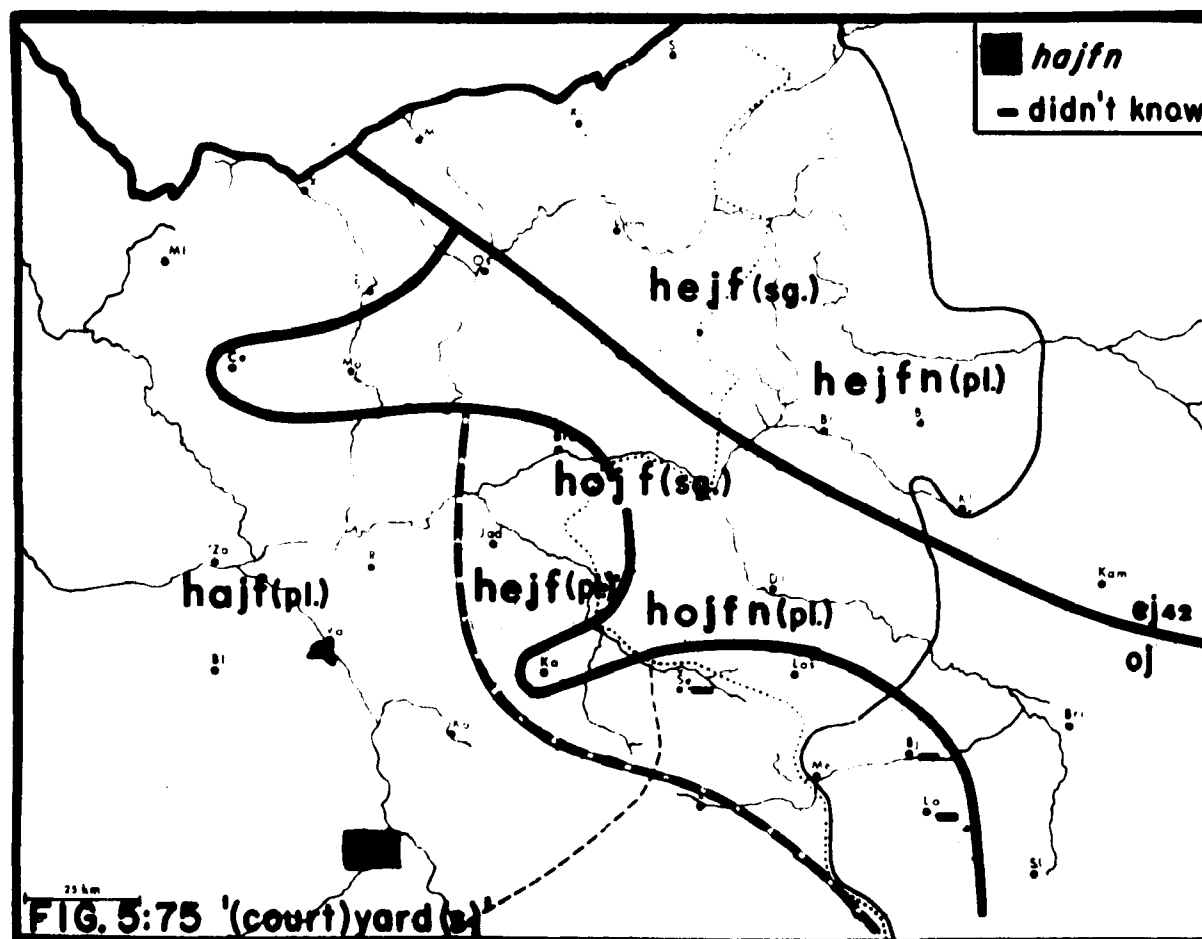
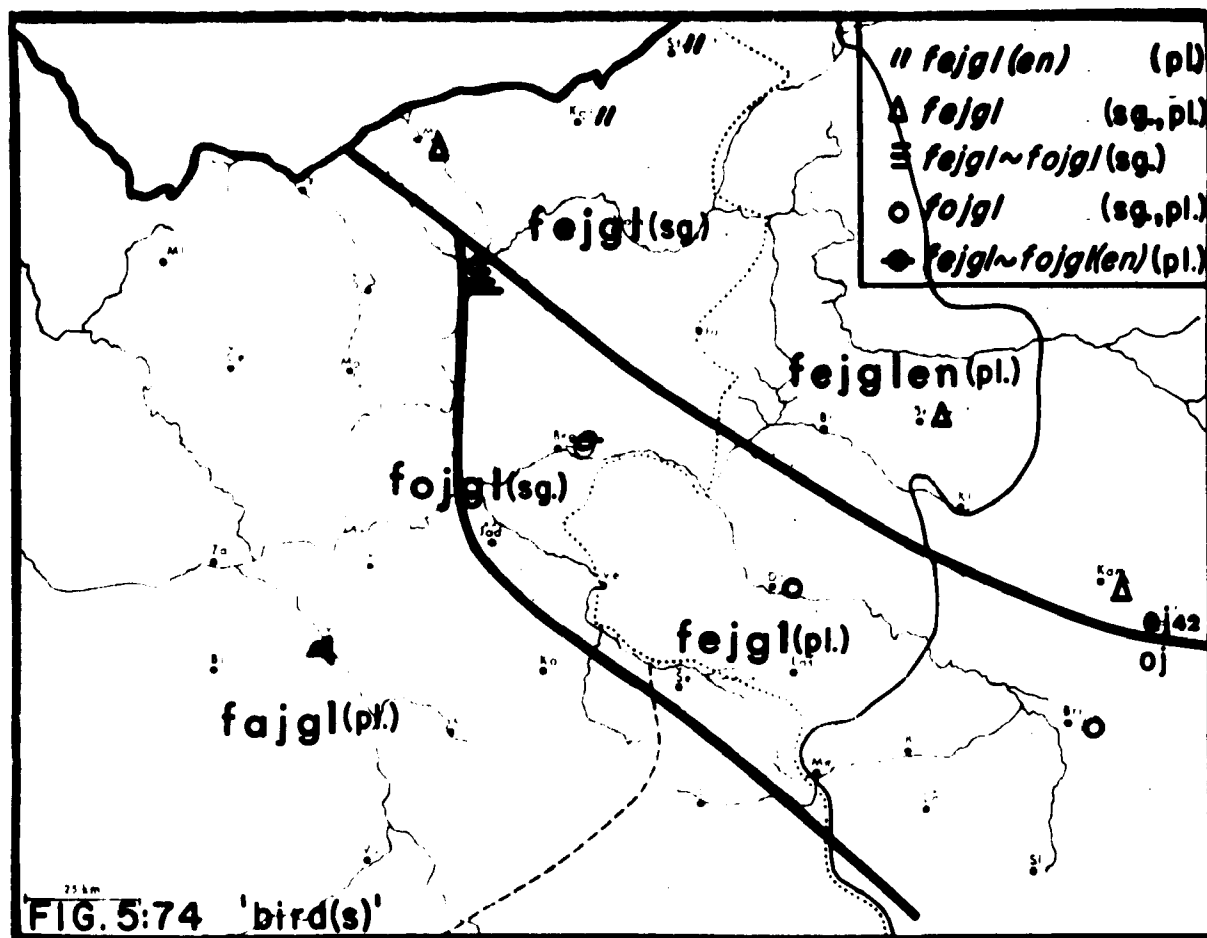
5.14.21 Grammatical Consequences of Unrounding 42. The NEY unrounding of P(N)EY ɔy<sub>42</sub> had much the same grammatical effects as the SY fronting of 51, 52 (see above §5.12.211). The merger, ej<sub>22</sub> 42, that resulted from the change eliminated a regular process for distinguishing singular and plural substantives. Some of the results are illustrated in Figs. 5:74-5:75 (cf. Figs. 5:8-5:12).

In place of vowel mutation we observe that NEY has developed new suffixed plurals: [fejgl < fojgl] 'bird': NEY pl. [fejglən] (Fig. 5:74); [hejɸ < hojɸ] 'yard': NEY pl. [hejfn] (Fig. 5:75).

In the case of 'birds' we find that Brok, the town from which we record two sporadic occurrences of ej<sub>42</sub> (cf. Fig. 5:71), overcompensates for the NEY merger with sg. [fojgl]: pl. [fejglən]. In two other border communities, hypercorrection has led to homonymy: [fojgl] 'bird(s)'.

Fig. 5:75 reveals an instance of overcompensation as far west as Vorke: [hojɸ] 'yard': pl. [hajfn]. This is hardly unusual in





view of the widespread distribution of a new suffixed plural in the transition area as well. That the vowel of singular and plural are alike in these cases, [hojf]: [hojfn], reflects the high degree of hypercorrection that has in general affected both spoken and written Yiddish as a result of contact between ej<sub>22</sub> and oj<sub>22</sub>. Attempts to avoid the homonymy of NEY ej<sub>22 42</sub> e.g. [brejt] 'broad' = 'bread' [vejmn] 'to reside' = 'to cry',<sup>32</sup> [zejgn] 'to suck' = 'to nurse', [hejx] 'tall' = 'height' etc. has yielded many examples of oj<sub>22</sub>: onhojbn 'to begin', glojbn 'to believe' alongside of 'belief', di hojx 'the height', di grojs 'the size', etc. The transition area of Northern Poland, together with its extension in the southeast, may have been the source of this development in the language.

### 5.14.3 Half Fronting and Monophthongization of Vowel 54.

5.14.31 Half Fronting of Vowel 54. In some areas of NEY, vowel 54 has remained [au] or [ou]. We recorded vestiges of au<sub>54</sub> in Kol'ne (cf. Fig. 5:44)<sup>33</sup> while ou<sub>54</sub> was common both to Kol'ne and Jáblenke (cf. Figs. 5:45, 5:48). Elsewhere in our NEY area, with the exception of Ostrelenke, 54 has typically been half fronted to [oj].

We assume that this development must have followed the unrounding of oy<sub>42</sub>, since its recency can easily be inferred. In

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<sup>32</sup> Our investigation also confirms that the euphemism vu frejt ir zix, literally, 'where do you rejoice?', an attempt to avoid the homonymy of [vu vejnt ir] 'where do you live = cry?' is coterritorial with the merger ej<sub>22 42</sub>

<sup>33</sup> In all, three words with au were noted: [baux] 'stomach' (Fig. 5:44), [faust] 'fist', and [knaú]<sup>54</sup> 'ball, clew' (Std. Yid. knojł).

any case no variety of NEY has two 'mixed' diphthongs like [ɥy] and [oj].

Two structural causes of the NEY fronting may be pondered: in the absence of length distinctions, the status of [ou] as a possible long counterpart of [o], is likely to be affected; moreover, diphthongs with [u]-offglides are likely to be unstable wherever [ɫ] is velarized. Our northern communities, particularly Ostrelenke and Lomze, have both [ɫ'] and a highly velar [ɫ], while in neighboring Kol'ne and Stučín, only [ɫ'] occurs: the non-palatal variant has been vocalized.<sup>34</sup> Thus it is not surprising to discover occurrences of ol<sub>54</sub> (cf. Fig. 5:44 [bolx] 'stomach', in Ostrelenke), an easily anticipated compensation for the tendency [ɫ] > [u].<sup>35</sup>

5.14.32 Monophthongization of Vowel 54. What of the unique occurrence of u<sub>54</sub> in Ostrelenke (cf. Figs. 5:41-5:45)?<sup>36</sup> Its existence was unknown when U. Weinreich (1958b) published his account of u<sub>54</sub> in northeastern Belorussia and the southeastern Ukraine. Now, we also have evidence of the sporadic occurrences of u<sub>54</sub> elsewhere in our

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<sup>34</sup>Yet serving as a check on our argument is the fact that in some varieties of CY where ɫ is completely vocalized (e.g. Koleś in western Poland), ou<sub>54</sub> has nevertheless been preserved.

<sup>35</sup>Prilutski (1921:237) noted the occurrence of ol<sub>54</sub> alongside of [ou], in the Lomze area as well.

<sup>36</sup>In addition to the illustrated examples we have recorded [huz] 'house', [šruf] 'screw' [puk] 'drum', [muz] 'mouse' [fust] 'fist', [cug] 'bitch', [vajntrubm] 'grapes', [kul] 'bullet', and [hup] 'bonnet'.

area: [muz] and [mujz] 'mouse' respectively in Slávetič and Bilsk (Fig. 5:76), [klubm] 'to gather' in Drohečín (Fig. 5:77)<sup>37</sup> and [fru] 'woman, wife' in Mišnec (Fig. 5:78). This suggests that the monophthongal u<sub>54</sub> was at one time more widespread than previously anticipated. In addition, we observe from a comparison of Figs. 5:79, 5:84-5:85, that two separate monophthongal developments, u<sub>54</sub> and a<sub>54</sub> (cf. §5.14.33), led to the semantic differentiation of [uf] 'up (verbal complement)' from [af] 'on, upon (prep.)' in all of NEY.<sup>38</sup>

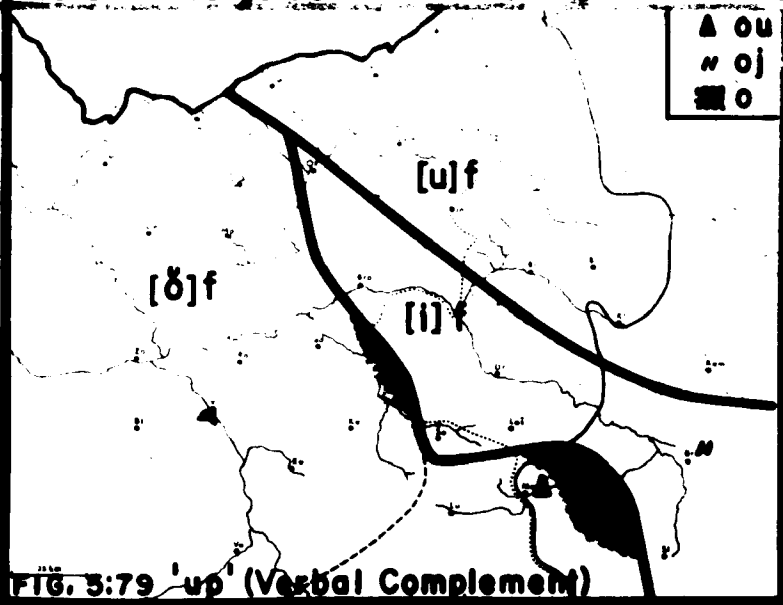
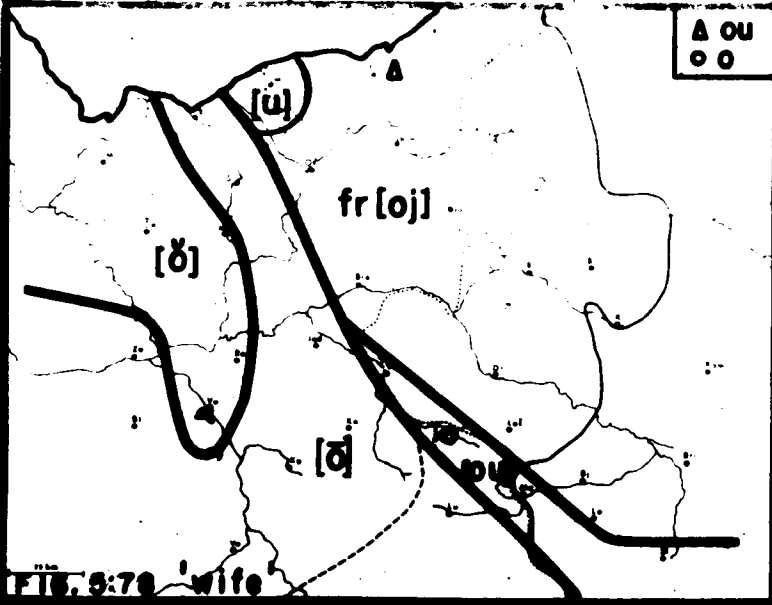
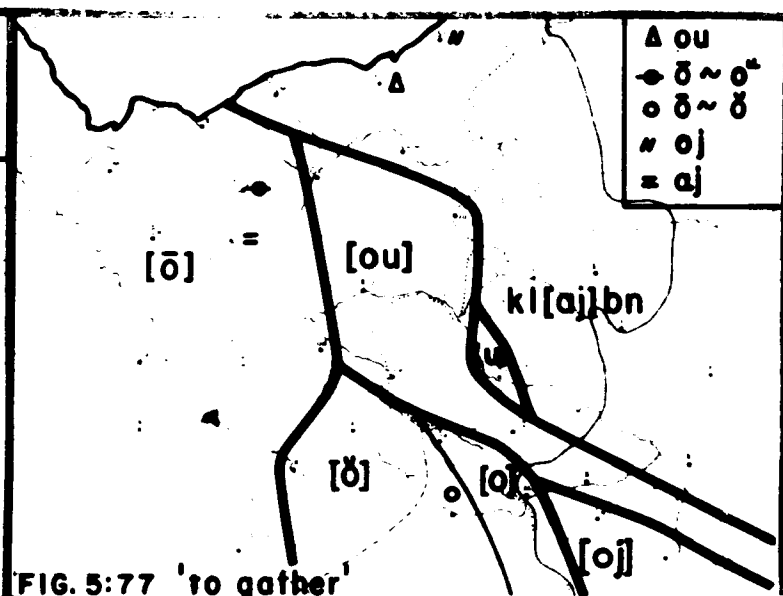
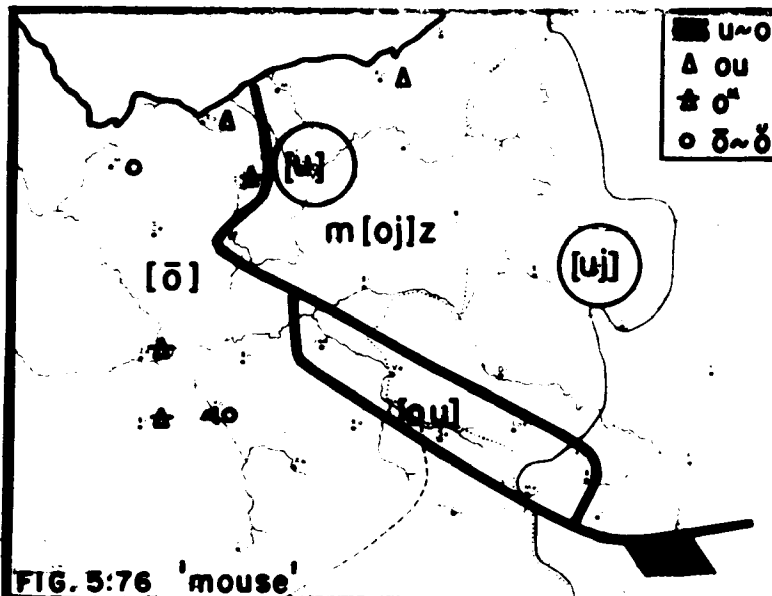
In any case, the emergence of u<sub>54</sub> in Ostrelenke was particularly well motivated. We observed in fn. 11 that Ostrelenke was unique in combining front unrounded i<sub>51 52</sub> with o<sub>12</sub>. Thus, if not for a handful of recent Germanisms, it would have lacked an [u] entirely had not 54 filled the gap. In Chapter 1 (§1.45) we described the conditions of our interview with the informants from Ostrelenke; two elderly parents had u<sub>54</sub>, with some vestiges of [ou], while the son, in his thirties, had only [oj]. Perhaps the marked closeness of o<sub>12 41</sub>, foreshadows the source of a new [u] in the son's speech.

5.14.33 Chronology of Changes in Vowel 54. Aside from references in the literature which testify to the relatively recent existence of ou<sub>54</sub> in areas where it has since yielded entirely to [oj] (cf. fn. 35),

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<sup>37</sup>The NEY variant [klaɟbm] must indicate a PY lexical doublet.

<sup>38</sup>While in CY the verbal complement and the preposition [of] were apparently never differentiated, the transition area follows the NEY pattern. Concerning the origin of the variant [if] in this area compare the discussion of Fig. 5:52 (§5.13.511).



the recency of the half fronting in NEY is now further attested by the variation between parents and son in Ostrelenke.<sup>38a</sup> (The recency of the CY changes of vowel 54, reflected by the extent to which individual words of the 54 group differ in the variant of the vowel they employ, was proposed in §5.13.4.)

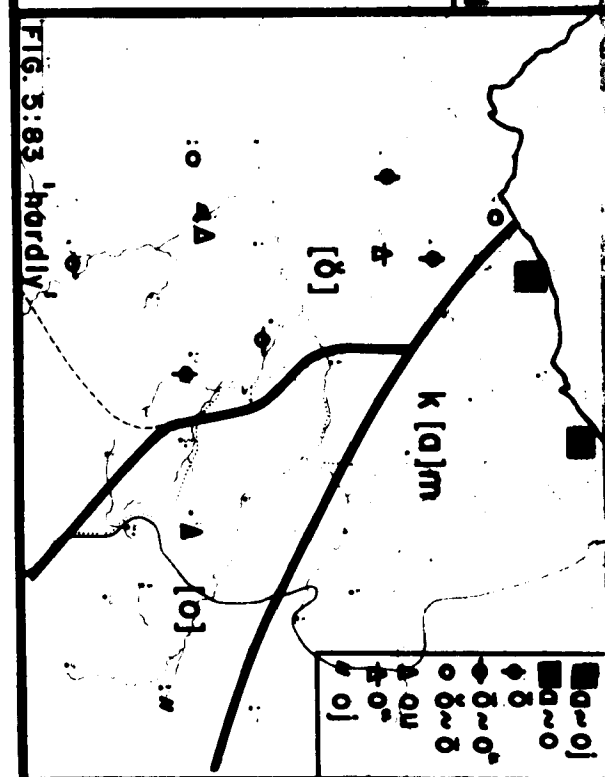
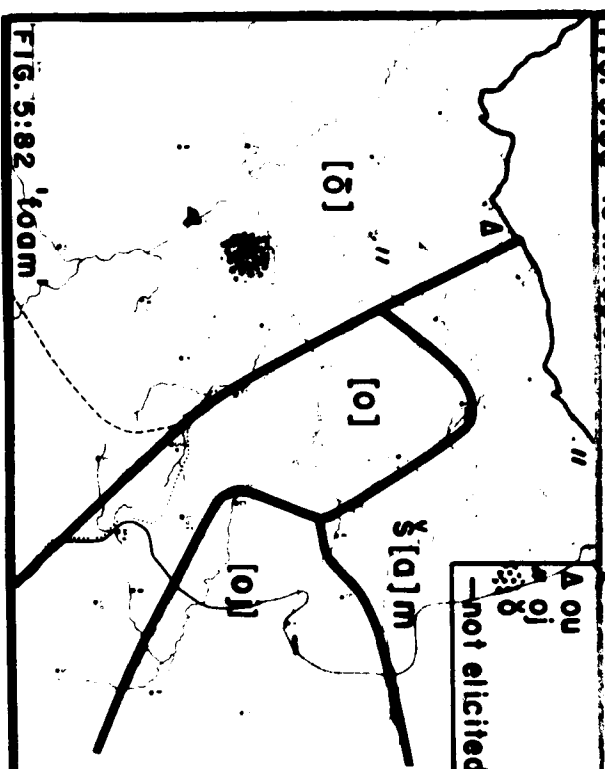
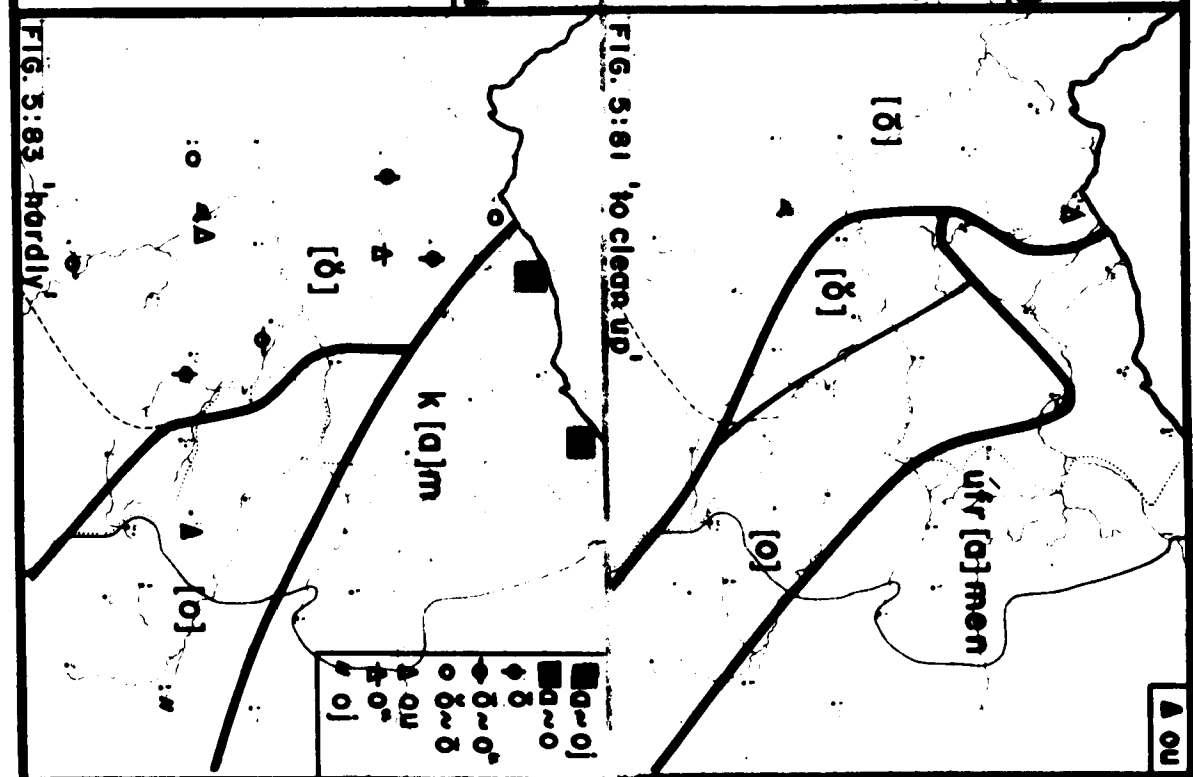
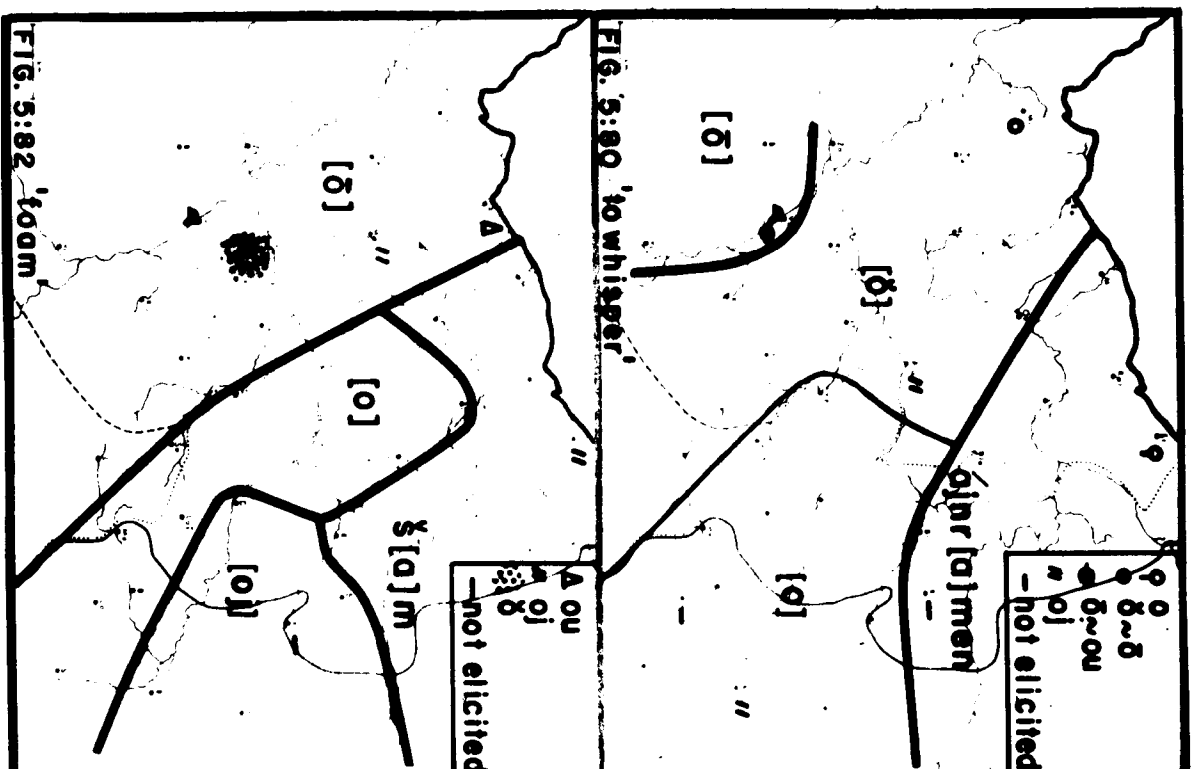
The feature of NEY 54 that suggests a reasonable starting point for the series of changes from which the present-day conditions emerged is depicted in Figs. 5:80-5:83. Here we have four words in which the NEY variant of 54 before [m] is [a]: [ájnramən] 'to whisper' (MHG rûnen, rûmen, rounen), [úframen] 'to clean up' (MHG rûmen), [šam] 'foam' (MHG schûm, schoum), and [kam] 'hardly' (MHG kûm(e)). Again, in a single lexical item, a<sub>54</sub> occurs before [f]: [af] 'on, upon' (MHG ûf, ouf) (Figs. 5:84-5:85). In one case, [af] extends westward to the very border of CY.

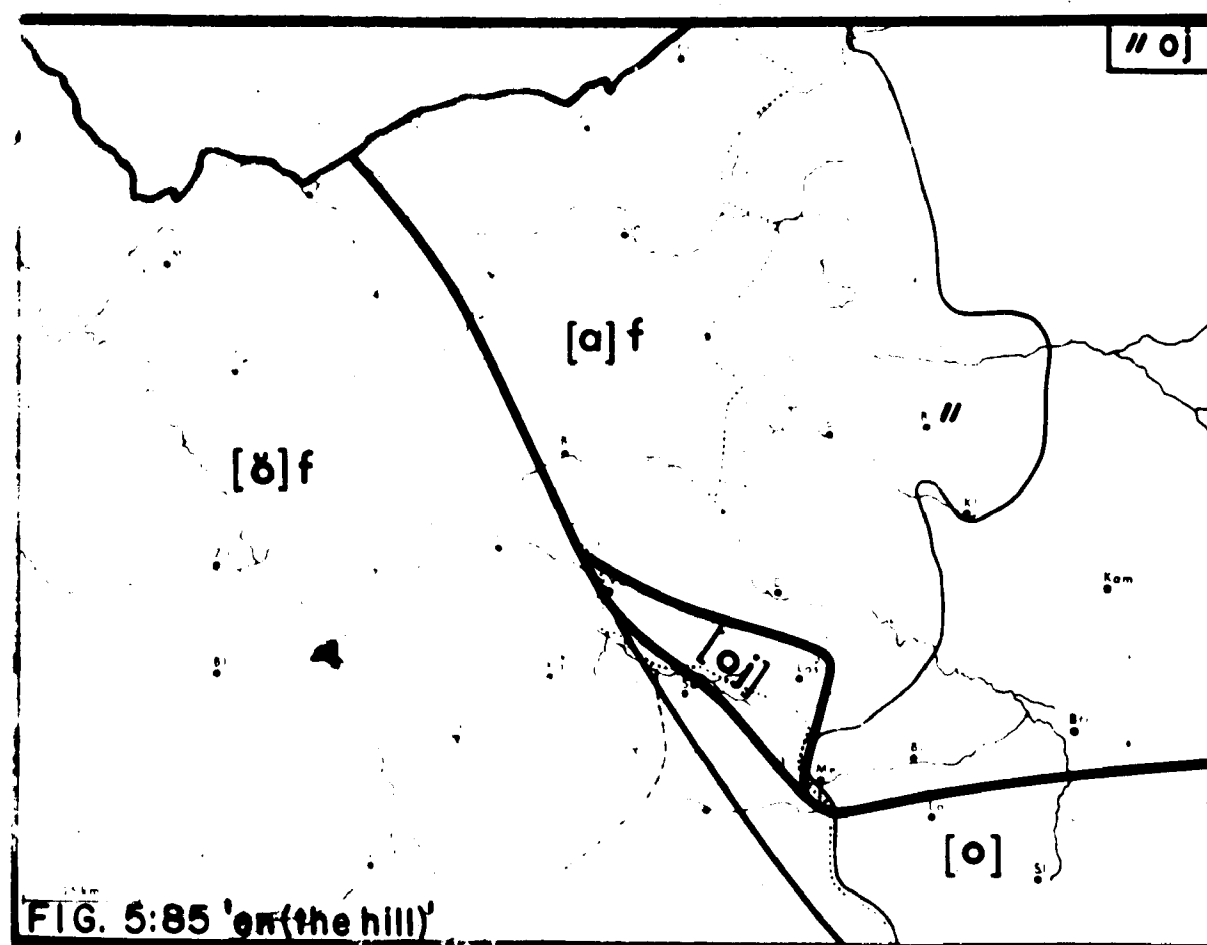
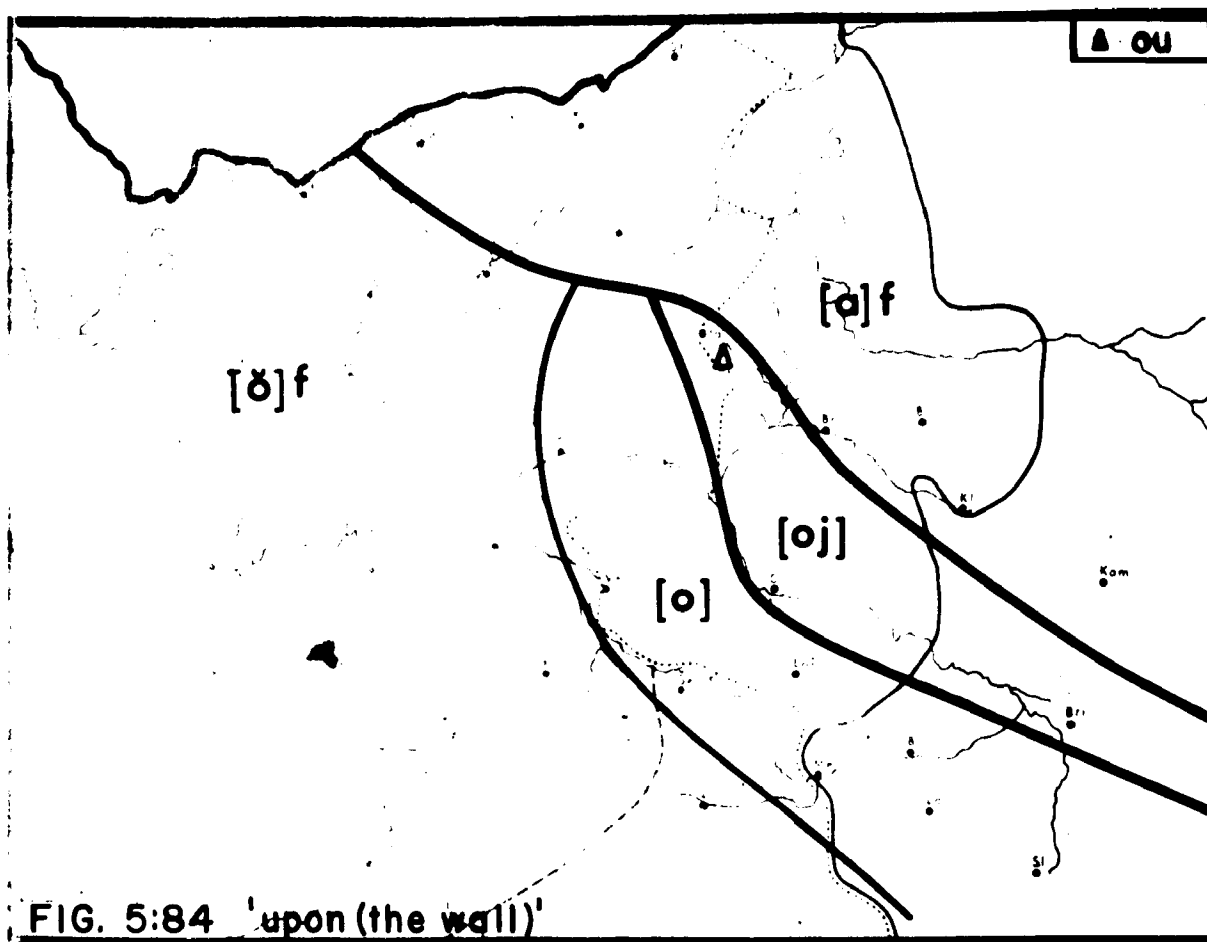
An alternative explanation of these forms is suggested by the fact that [ájnramən], [šam], and [af] have MHG cognates with **alternates** in ou (generally corresponding to WY 44 = EY 42). On these grounds it might be argued that the cited forms in [a] represent vestiges of WY influence in the east (cf. WY ā<sub>24 44</sub>). To argue thus requires, however, that we explain why WY influence should manifest itself only before the labials [m/f], and furthermore, why Yiddish words like [ramən] and [kam], with MHG cognates in û alone (generally Yiddish 54), should also have been affected.

These words strongly suggest the monophthongization of vowel 54 in its [au] stage. Given apparently contextually determined monophthongal variants of 54 both in CY and NEY, and the replacement of ou<sub>54</sub>

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<sup>38a</sup> The recency of ou<sub>54</sub> > [oj] in NEY suggests a preexisting [oj], and strengthens the proposal in fn. 2a, that 42 was already [oj] in PNEY.







as the final step in the chronology of changes in both areas, we are confronted with the only instance of parallelism between the two dialects. Thus we are tempted to examine the possibility that the manifestly different regional variants of 54 are actually the result of a common Yiddish change of single origin.

We have proposed that the positional variant a<sub>54</sub> was derived from the diphthong [au]. Its universality in our northeastern area, together with the vestiges of au<sub>54</sub> in Kol'ne (cf. fn. 36), suggest that this [au] was formerly more common. In the juxtaposition of its u- offglide with other labials (primarily [m]) we visualize an assimilation of articulations that yielded the monophthong [a]; subsequently au<sub>54</sub> in other positions became [ou].<sup>39</sup>

Given now the completely vocalic quality of Polish a-- which might easily have had more widespread affects on Yiddish than are now directly in evidence--we can understand the instability of all u-diphthongs. Sequences of [au]/[al] > [au], and [ou]/[ol] > [ou]; thus in Kol'ne [faust] functions both as 'fist' (Std. Yid. fojst) and 'you fall' (Std. Yid. falst); both in Kol'ne and Stučín [mou] is 'mouth' (Std. Yid. mojl) and 'time(s)' (Std. Yid. mol). In the subsequent restoration of [l], many au/ou sequences, of whatever source, would be likely to become al/ol. Thus [mol < mou < moul] 'mouth' (Fig. 5:48), [farfolt < farfout < farfoult] 'rotten' (Fig. 5:49) and [bolx < boux]

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<sup>39</sup> For its possible bearing on this development we cite the following from Kuraszkiewicz (1963:77): "In the [Belorussian] dialects between Mińsk, Wilejka and Wołkowysk the cluster au changed into ou, e.g. tróuka 'trawka' ['little grass'], próuda ['truth'], šukóu 'szukał' ['he sought']."

'stomach' (Fig. 5:44).<sup>40</sup>

This would certainly account for the (largely) CY occurrence of  $\underline{o}_{54}$  before [l]. That [o] <  $\underline{ou}_{54}$  is generally lacking in NEY probably testifies to the efficacy of the westward push of [oj].

Aside from these positionally determined developments, the fate of  $\underline{ou}_{54}$ , under the pressure of  $\underline{u} = [u/w]$ , was further determined by different regional structural pressures: in CY by the hole in the pattern at the place of a long mid-back vowel (hence  $54 > [\bar{o}]$ ; in NEY by the unrounding of  $\underline{oy}$  (hence, as a parallel move,  $54 > [oj]$ ; and, uniquely in Ostrelenke, by the absence of a high back vowel (hence  $54 > [u]$ ).<sup>41</sup>

5.14.4 Other Features of the NEY Vowel System. Several minor features of NEY are described below. None of them are of any apparent significance to the chronology of changes presented in the preceding paragraphs.

In prevocalic position both  $\underline{u}_{52}$  (Fig. 5:86) and  $\underline{o}_{12}$  (Fig. 5:87) are diphthongized. Similarly  $\underline{a}_{11} > [aj]$  before [ng/nk] (Fig. 5:88).

The NEY forms [mæɔr] 'thin' (Fig. 5:89) and [átəmen] 'to breathe' appear to be late (19th century?) borrowings from German. We can hardly account for  $\underline{a}_{12}$  otherwise. The expected NEY forms in [o] occur sporadically while to the west  $\underline{u}_{12}$  is regular. In Fig. 5:90

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<sup>40</sup>We have also recorded [polk] 'drum' in Šedlec, [zolber] 'clean' in Lomás, and [štolp] 'dust' in Bjale (the latter a confusion of 42 and 54).

<sup>41</sup>We will see below (§5.15.2) that this gap in Ostrelenke, the result of fronting 51, 52, must have been a relatively late development.

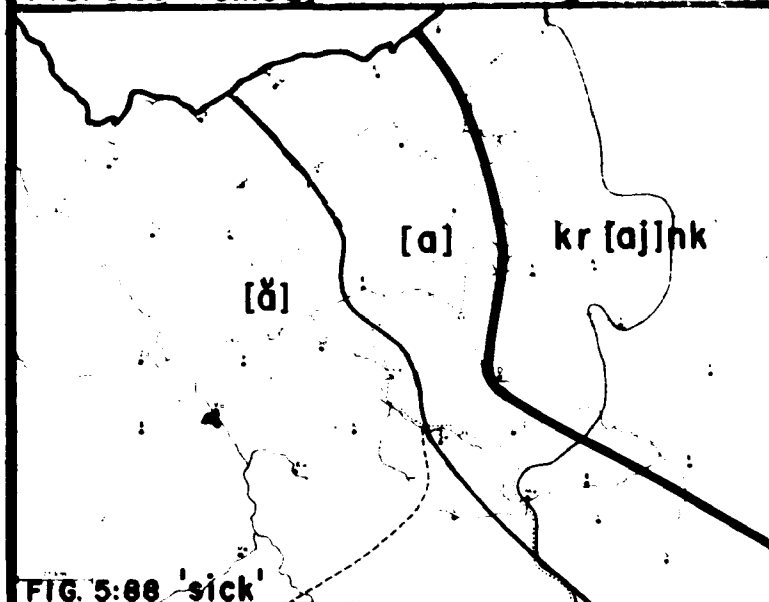
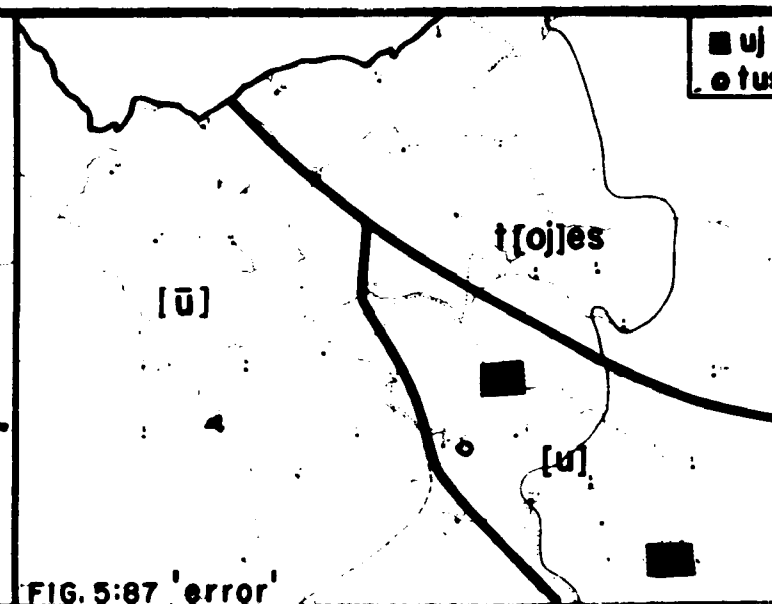
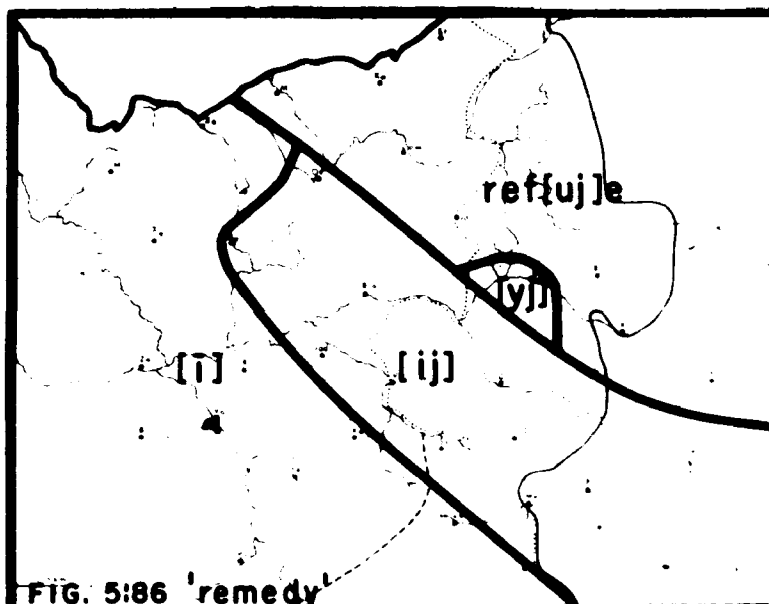
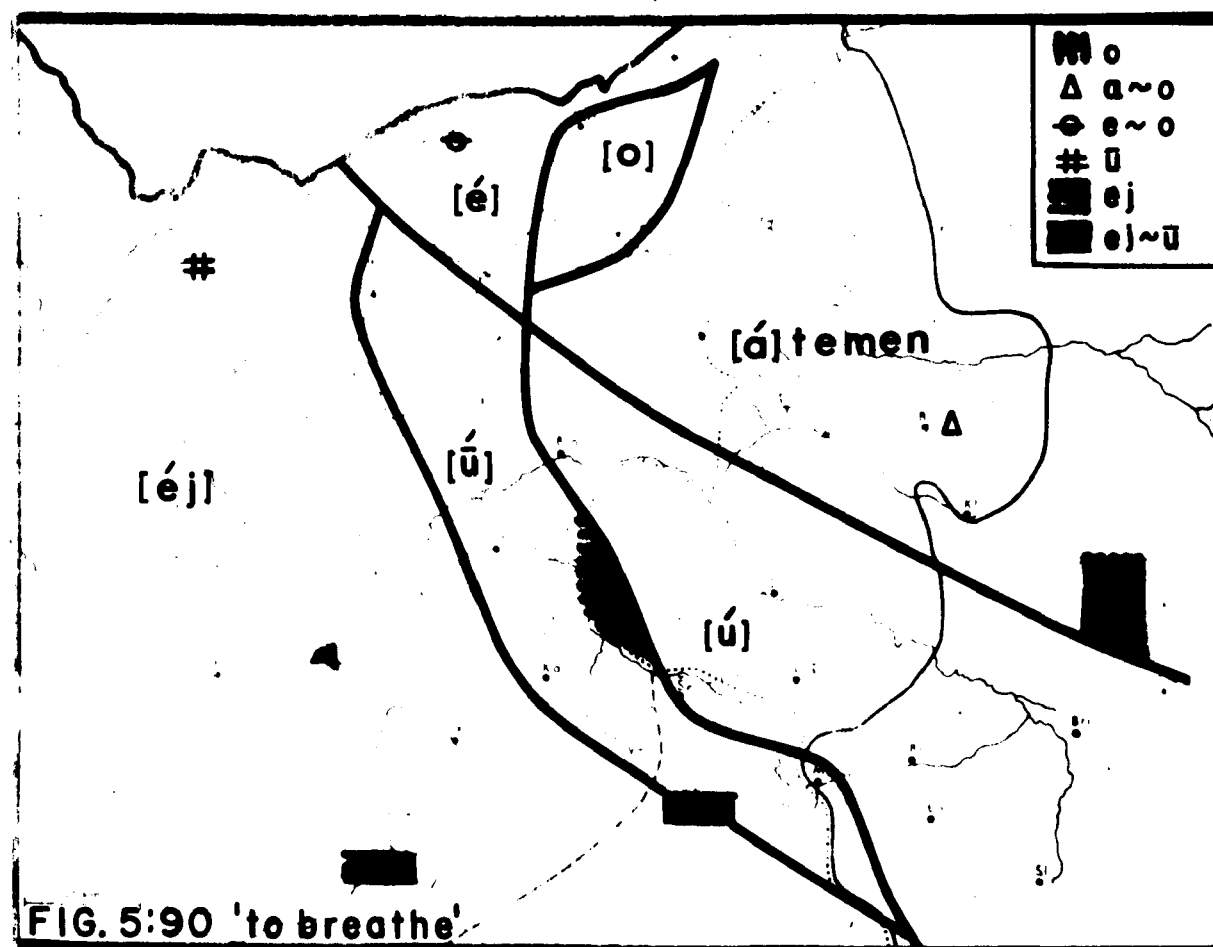
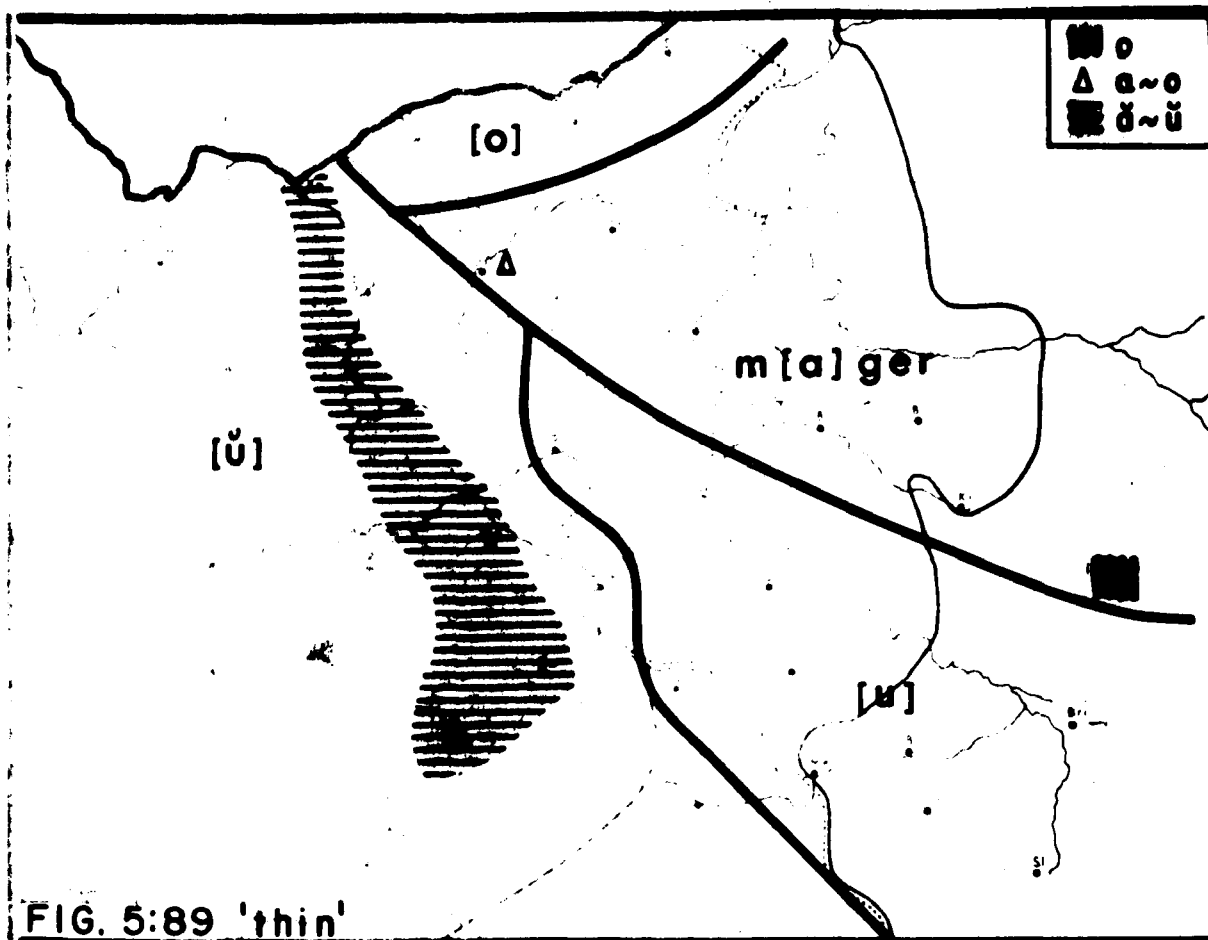


FIG.5:86 VOWEL 52 PREVOCALIC

FIG.5:87 VOWEL 12 PREVOCALIC

FIG.5:88 VOWEL 11 BEFORE ng/nk



the picture is complicated by variation in the lexical doublet [étəməɳ/éjtəməɳ] 'to breathe' with vowel 25 (cf. MHG âtemen, ætemen).

### 5.15 The Transition Area

The origin of the transition area that separates CY and NEY is virtually implicit in a description of their development. As we have seen, the divergence of the two major dialect areas is easily accounted for in terms of a series of Stammbaum splits; the formation of the intermediate area, on the other hand, is inexplicable except as the result of a convergence of the two. We have made continual reference to facts bearing out this view. In the following paragraphs much the same data is considered somewhat differently.

We cannot point with certainty to the precise geographic limits of an individual sound change at the time of its occurrence. It is apparent, however, that once a change ~~has~~ taken place, the most significant linguistic factor to limit its diffusion is the nature of the phonological system with which it comes into contact. If changes emanating from opposite directions are structurally compatible they may overlap, with the result that a third system will emerge which may, in turn, determine the fate of the two adjoining systems, provided all three remain in relatively unimpeded contact.

Paule Garde (1961) has clearly formulated the principle that underlies these contentions. We assume that an isogloss moving between an area in which an etymological distinction is maintained and another in which it is not, is normally oriented in the direction of the merger. If no extra-linguistic factors interfere, only the merger can expand

geographically at the expense of the differentiation.<sup>42</sup>

Only rarely do the facts seem to belie the stated principle.

5.15.1 Direction of Change. The simplest case is illustrated in Fig. 5:91: the merger respectively of the high vowels 31 and 51, 32 and 52, a result of the CY fronting of PEY  $\check{u}_{51}$  and  $\bar{u}_{52}$ , is obviously an eastward moving phenomenon. At the same time the loss of length in NEY, which has given rise to the total merger of 31, 32, 51, 52, is inevitably oriented in a southwesterly direction.

In Fig. 5:92 we note that the qualitative differentiation of CY 12 and 41 is opposed by their NEY merger. Should a new [u] emerge from the close [o] in Ostrelenke (cf. §5.14.32), a good deal of hypercorrection would be anticipated.

The relative location of the variants in Fig. 5:93 suggests the possibility that the merger of  $\underline{a}_{11\ 34}$  in Šedlec would encroach upon the varieties on either side of it. There is only sporadic evidence that this has in fact occurred (cf. Fig. 5:19). Notwithstanding the cited principle (fn. 42) the more common phenomenon, by far, is the westward advance of  $\underline{aj}_{34}$ . The resulting hypercorrection of vowel 11 in Šedlec was previously noted (§5.12.4).

Fig. 5:94 is somewhat complicated. A four-way contrast in CY is opposed by a two-way contrast in NEY. In the transitional center three contrasts are maintained. The most "aggressive" phenomenon is the

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<sup>42</sup>"Remarquons que cette orientation peut être déterminée par le simple examen de la situation régnant de part et d'autre de l'isoglosse, et sans aucune recherche historique. ... seul le fait même de l'homonymie est une donnée immédiate de l'analyse synchronique, et porte en lui-même le signe indiquant son orientation" (Garde 1961:40).

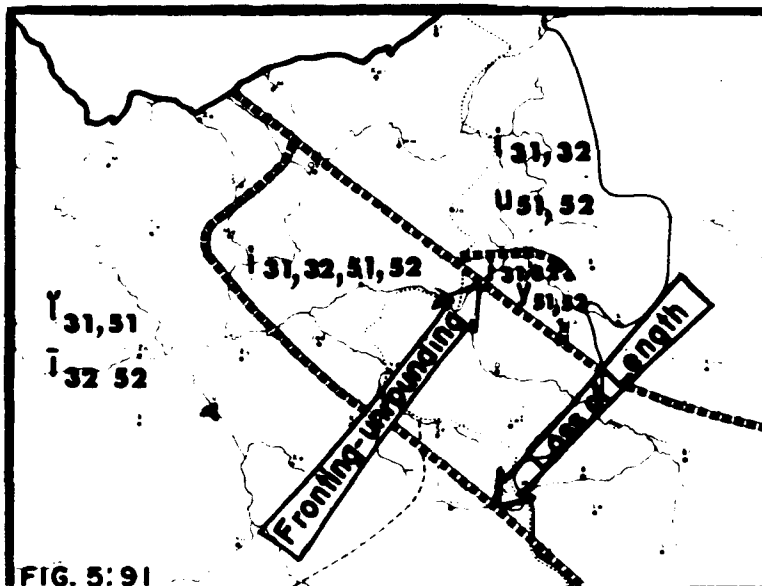


FIG. 5:91

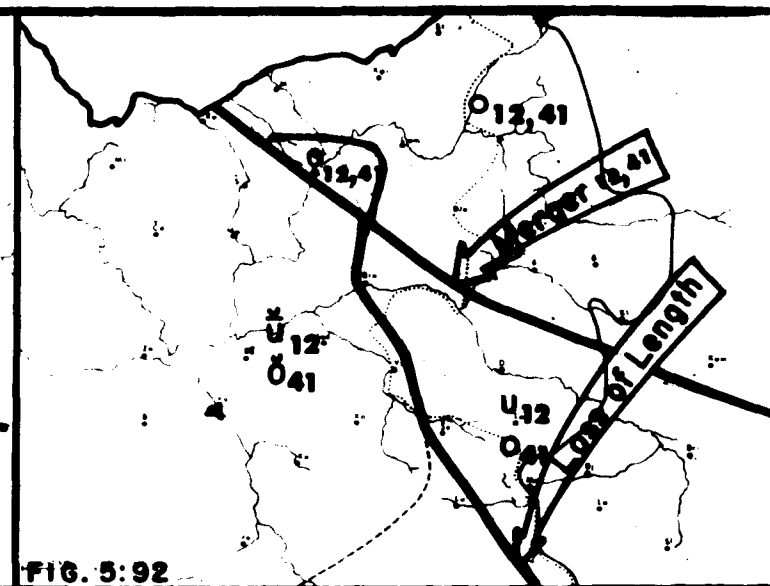


FIG. 5:92

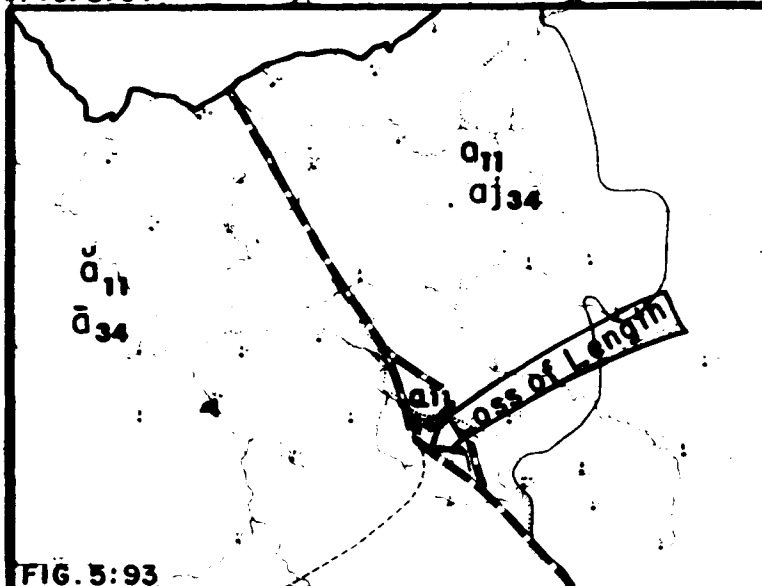


FIG. 5:93

FIG. 5:91 CY FRONTING-UNROUNDING 51,  
52;  
MERGER WITH 31, 32.

FIG. 5:92 CY RAISING I2;  
NEY MERGER I2, 41.

FIG. 5:93 MONOPHTHONGIZATION 34.

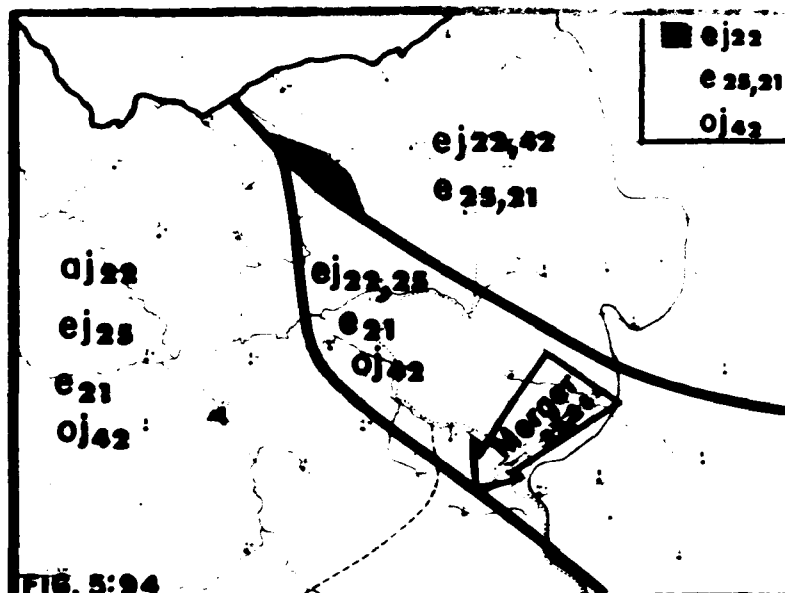


FIG. 5:94

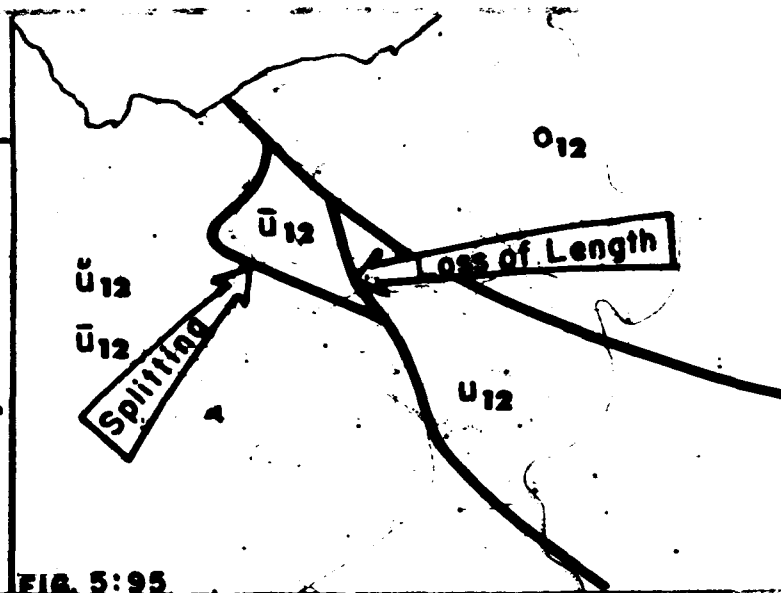


FIG. 5:95

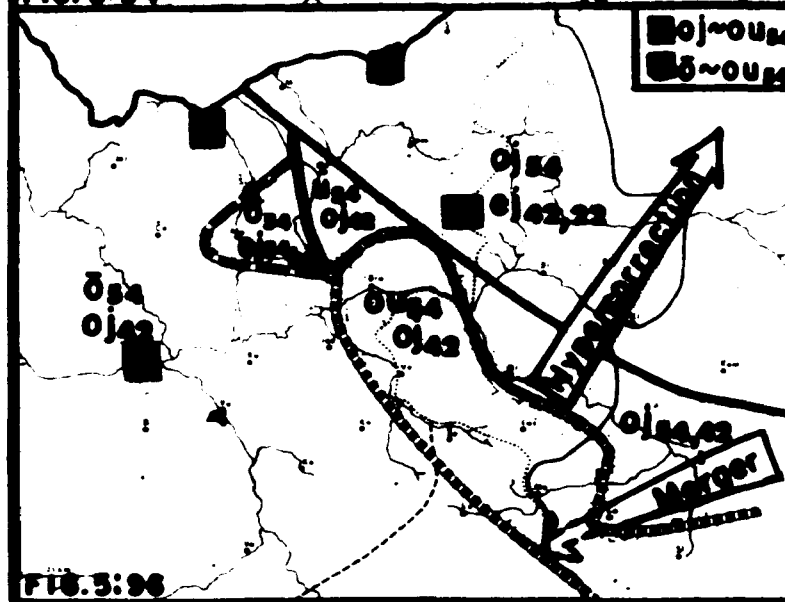


FIG. 5:96

FIG.5:94 CY LOWERING 22;  
DIPHTHONGIZATION 25;  
NEY FRONTING 42.

FIG.5:95 CY SPLITTING 12

FIG.5:96 CY MONOPHTHONGIZATION 54;  
NEY UNROUNDING 42.



central merger of  $\underline{ej}_{22\ 25}$ . However, since both 22 and 25 enter into different mergers in NEY, its border with the transition area is apt to remain stable with respect to the illustrated phenomenon. The merger of 22, 25 is, on the other hand, free to encroach upon the territory of the CY differentiation. The possibility that it has in fact done so was considered in §§5.13.1, 5.13.2.

The CY split of vowel 12 into [ǔ] and [ū](Fig. 5:95), which has not yet overtaken Mákeve (cf. §5.13.3), is seen to be contending with the wave of length elimination moving southwestward. From the one example of free variation in the distribution of the allophones of vowel 12 in Mákeve (cf. Figs. 5:14, 5:32) it seems likely that the process of differentiation would have gained by destroying the existing basis of complementation before a unitary phoneme was restored in response to northeastern pressures.

Finally we note the total merger of Vowels 54 and 42 in a small area of the southeast (Fig. 5:96). In many lexical items it has diffused to the borders of CY, and in one CY community (Mákeve) its advance has almost totally eliminated  $\bar{o}_{54}$ . The replacement of  $\underline{u}_{54}$  by [oj] in Ostrelenke has also been described (§5.14.32). Its northeastward advance, which is undoubtedly inhibited by the NEY merger of vowels 42, 22, has nevertheless been adequate to give rise to considerable hypercorrection both in speech and writing (cf. 5.14.21).

5.15.2 The Emergence of NCY. The nature of the development of NCY as a definable entity is nowhere more strikingly apparent than in the next two illustrations. In Fig. 5:97 we observe the differential distribution of length distinctions perserved in CY. While the isogloss

of  $\bar{a}_{34}$  represents the eastern outpost of vocalic length, we might speak of the limit of  $\bar{i}_{32\ 52}$ , in its opposition to  $\bar{i}_{31\ 51}$ , as the western limit of "non-length". Between the two run the isoglosses of  $\bar{o}$  and  $\bar{u}$  yielding somewhat different vowel systems in Mákeve, Jádeve and Véngréve.<sup>43</sup>

The three cited communities have only a single feature in common that distinguishes them from others where vocalic length has been preserved: the absence of a length distinction in the high front vowel. Vowels 31, 32, 51, 52 have merged throughout.<sup>44</sup> In this merger we detect the clue to the entire development of NCY.

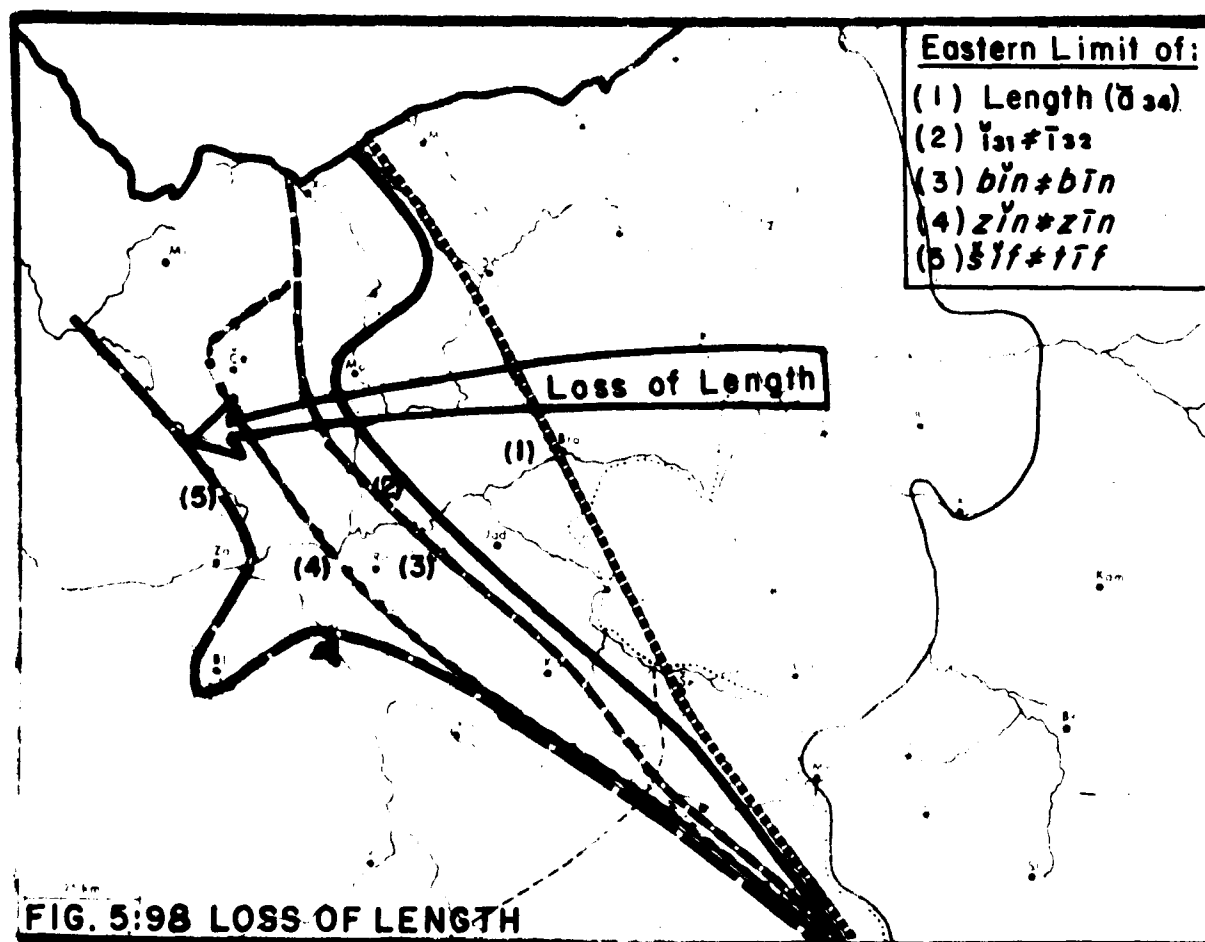
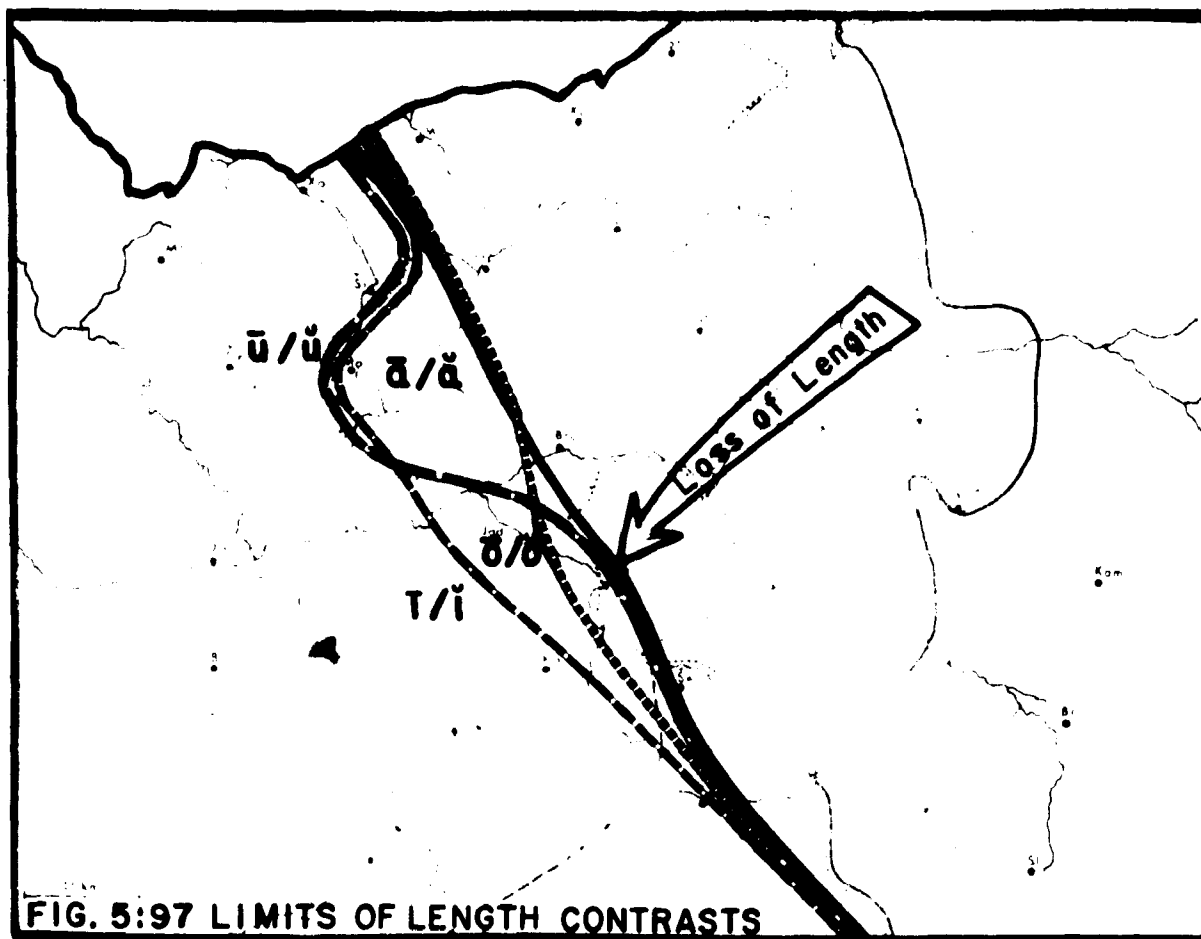
As we have indicated, the features of the transition area seem to be explicable only if we consider the effects of dialect contact. They unmistakably reflect the impact of a non-length dialect on contiguous varieties in the length area and the progressive westward elimination of the length feature. NCY is the result of the "ultimate" stabilization of this process, while the varieties to the west of it are, so to speak, living examples of the change in progress.

The progressive encroachment of NEY (i.e. non-length) features on the domain of former CY (i.e. length) territory resulted in various reinterpretations of the length oppositions. Generally speaking, the

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<sup>43</sup>At this stage it seems pointless to consider e/ej contrasts in terms of length. Though everywhere of different origin, [ej] is universally a diphthong, and reckoning with a CY [ē] is only a structurally convenient expedient.

<sup>44</sup>It is this phenomenon that permitted us to posit an  $\bar{i}_{32\ 52}$  stage in Véngréve (§5.13.2). Preceded by the merger described above,  $\bar{i}_{32\ 52}$  could then have been easily replaced by [ej] without the threat of lexical turmoil.



long member of each pair was replaced by a j(od) diphthong, as [ā] by [aj] and [ō], or [ou], by [oj]. In the case of the high front vowel, however, no model for a reinterpretation other than a complete merger of long and short was available. Fig. 5:98 provides ample evidence of the dynamic nature of this merger. It shows the increasing collapse of specific near-minimal and minimal pairs in the contiguous CY area which otherwise continues to distinguish ī<sub>31 51</sub> from ī<sub>32 52</sub>. There can be little doubt that the varieties which show signs of this collapse reflect the same development as those in which the development has been completely effected. All are historically part of the CY length dialect, reacting to the impact of contact with NEY. All reveal the manner in which dialect contact, by destroying the contrast between individual pairs, may ultimately lead to the elimination of a phonemic distinction.

The continuous efficacy of sound change and the persistence of the effects of dialect contact are evident from a comparison of our own record with descriptions found elsewhere in the literature. Veynger recorded uj<sub>54</sub> in Kámenec-Litóvsk (1928:II-III, 647f.), where our data shows no trace of it, but he noted only o<sub>54</sub> and ou<sub>54</sub> in Ostrelenke (1926:I, 190) with no trace of either u<sub>54</sub> or i<sub>51 52</sub> -- unique features in the speech of our own informant. On the other hand, Veynger's informant had ej<sub>42</sub> while ours had only [oj]. Veynger, like Prilutski, regrettably fails to provide biographical data which would permit us better to evaluate his informants, but certain inferences about the town in question and the chronology of changes can nevertheless be drawn from the comparison.

The town of Ostrelenke, situated at the confluence of the river Oržec which runs southwestward into CY territory and the Narev running eastward into the domain of NEY, must have been a NEY community in which, as we might expect from the "orientation" of isoglosses depicted in Fig. 5:91,  $\underline{u}_{51\ 52}$  gave way to [i]. However, the replacement of  $\underline{ej}_{42}$  by [oj]--a development implied by a comparison of our data with Veynger's (*ibid.*)--without at the same time affecting  $\underline{ej}_{22}$  (cf. Fig. 5:94), is a little difficult to imagine.

In any case, the loss of  $\underline{u}_{51\ 52}$  was followed by the emergence of  $\underline{u}_{54} < [\text{ou}]$ .<sup>45</sup> This would then have served as an adequate barrier to the raising of l2, a phenomenon that is elsewhere closely linked with the fronting of 51, 52. We have already suggested the possibility that the recorded replacement of  $\underline{u}_{54}$  by [oj] in Ostrelenke would be followed by the raising of l2. In that event  $\underline{o}_{41}$  would be raised as well unless the proximity of the SY differentiation served as a model for keeping the two apart. This might also serve to explain the differentiation of  $\underline{ej}_{22\ 42}$ .

In Chapter 1 we stated that the splitting of dialects, according to phonological criteria alone, was no longer the major objective of language geography. If we nevertheless subdivide our area in these terms, it is primarily on the assumption that it is useful to examine the results of our subdivision against the background of the traditional

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<sup>45</sup>In terms of the structural pressure which we have proposed as a stimulant to the replacement of  $\underline{ou}_{54}$  (§5.14.33), it is interesting to note that Veynger's informant from Ostrelenke, with [i] in his own speech, recalled that in the speech of some of his friends  $\underline{i}$  had been vocalized (1926:loc. cit.).

classification of Yiddish dialects.

Two criteria underlie our definition of the dialects in our area: their inventory of stressed vowel phonemes coupled with the distribution of the phonemes in the lexicon. Defined in these terms, dialects emerge from the intersection of the synchronic and the diachronic axes. It will thus also be useful to compare the present classification with another, more traditional one, in Chapter 7, based on synchronic criteria alone.

In Table 6 we juxtaposed the systems of CY and NEY. With these we may now compare the vowel system of NCY (Table 11).<sup>46</sup>

TABLE 11  
STRESSED VOWEL SYSTEM OF NCY

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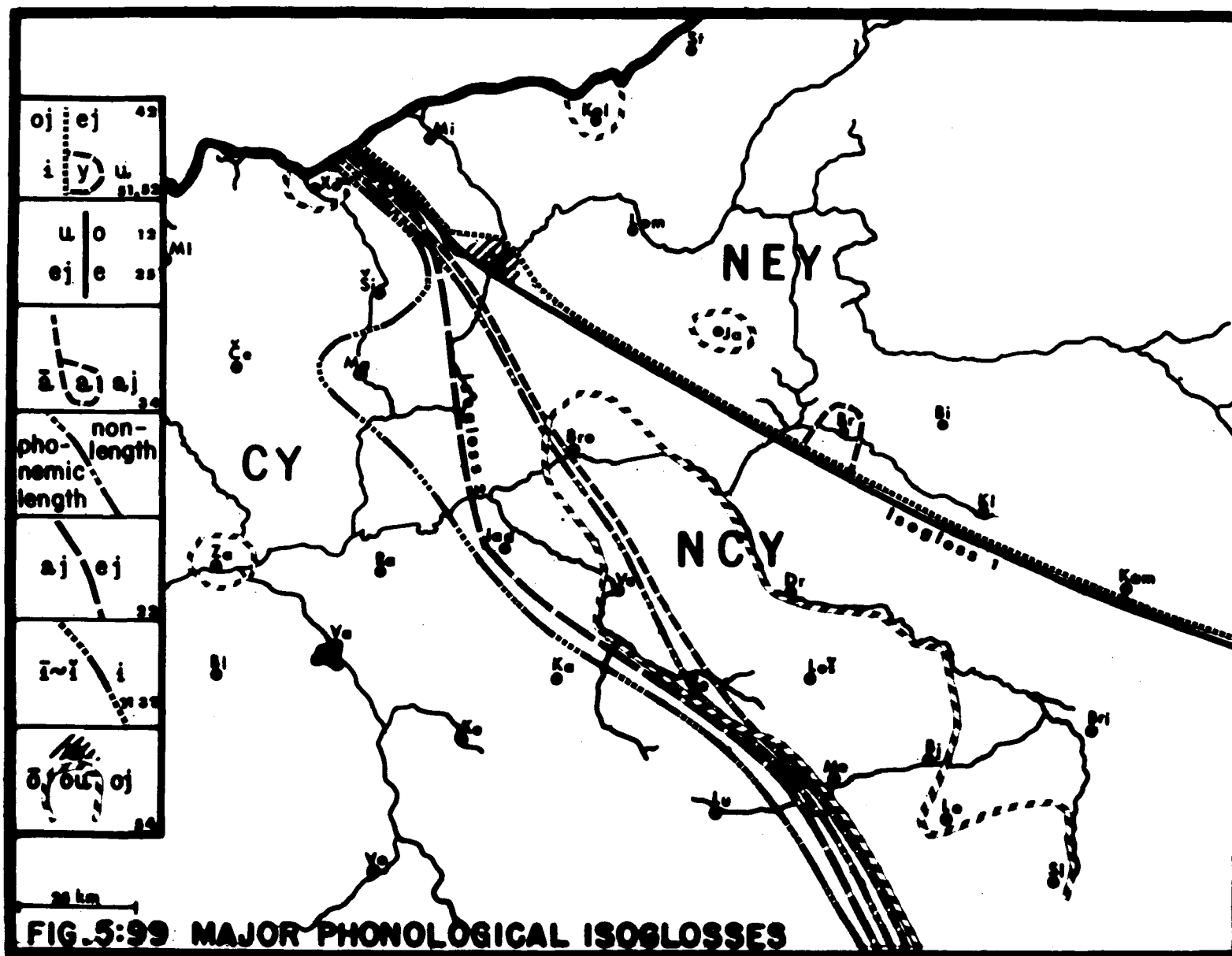
i		u
31 32 33		12 13
51 52 53		
e		o
21		41
	a	
	11	
ej	aj	oj
22 23 24 25	34	42 43 44 54 (ou 54)

---

In Fig. 5:99 we have superimposed all the major phonological isoglosses. The borders of the three dialects are here clearly defined. On the periphery of each area, with vowel systems in various stages of

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<sup>46</sup>For easier comparison we have included separate references both to the vowels of the O3 series (i.e. PY short vowels in open syllable) and to vowels 24 and 44 (cf. fn. 1f.).



transition, lie the individual varieties that we have previously singled out for special mention. Their relationship to one another and to the neighboring dialects is further clarified in Table 12.<sup>47</sup>

## 5.2 Consonantism

### 5.21 Functional Status of h

The isogloss in Fig. 5:100 divides most of CY, where etymological h is commonly preserved, from the eastern communities where h-dropping is frequent. A certain amount of deviation occurs on both sides of the border. The restoration of intervocalic h, and the inevitable concomitant hypercorrections, occur with varying degrees of frequency in the east (Fig. 5:101).<sup>48</sup>

### 5.22 Neutralization of Voice Distinctions

Voicing neutralization takes two distinct forms in the area. Regressive voicing of consonants in close juncture is most characteristic of the eastern communities (Fig. 5:102), although in specific instances there is considerable variation (Fig. 5:103).

Of greater historical interest is the development of distinctive word-final voicing, a feature of NEY whose distribution in our area is

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<sup>47</sup>The place of [ej] or [ou] in each of these descriptions is simply a matter of structural expediency.

<sup>48</sup>U. Weinreich (1963:102f.) proposes that, "under the influence of /h/-less Polish," Yiddish throughout Poland originally lost its distinctive /h/. This development followed the settlement of Lithuania in the north-east where distinctive /h/ has been retained, but was exported southward by the migrations into the Ukraine which followed it. The restoration of /h/ in the western sector of CY was then effected by new migrations from Germany in the 16th century.



highly inconsistent (Figs. 5:104-5:105).

TABLE 12

## STRESSED VOWEL SYSTEMS OF THE BORDER VARIETIES

<u>Mákeve</u>	<u>Šedlec</u>
$i$ <sub>31 32</sub> $\bar{u}$ <sub>12</sub> $e_j$ <sub>25</sub> $e$ <sub>21</sub> $\bar{o}$ <sub>41</sub> ( $\bar{o}$ ) <sub>54</sub> $\check{a}$ <sub>11</sub> $\bar{a}$ <sub>34</sub> $a_j$ <sub>23</sub> $o_j$ <sub>42 54</sub>	$i$ <sub>31 32</sub> $u$ <sub>12</sub> $e$ <sub>21</sub> $\bar{o}$ <sub>41</sub> $a$ <sub>11 34</sub> $e_j$ <sub>22 25</sub> $o_j$ <sub>42</sub> $ou$ <sub>54</sub>
<u>Jádeve</u>	<u>Ostrelenke</u>
$i$ <sub>31 32</sub> $\bar{u}$ <sub>12</sub> $\bar{u}$ <sub>12</sub> $e_j$ <sub>22 25</sub> $e$ <sub>21</sub> $\bar{o}$ <sub>41</sub> $\bar{o}$ <sub>54</sub> $\check{a}$ <sub>11</sub> $\bar{a}$ <sub>34</sub> $o_j$ <sub>42</sub>	$i$ <sub>31 32</sub> $u$ <sub>54</sub> $e$ <sub>21 25</sub> $\bar{o}$ <sub>41 12</sub> $a$ <sub>11</sub> $e_j$ <sub>22</sub> $a_j$ <sub>34</sub> $o_j$ <sub>42</sub>
<u>Véngreve</u>	<u>Brajnsk</u>
$i$ <sub>31 32</sub> $\bar{u}$ <sub>12</sub> $\bar{u}$ <sub>12</sub> $e_j$ <sub>22 25</sub> $e$ <sub>21</sub> $\bar{o}$ <sub>41</sub> $ou$ <sub>54</sub> $\check{a}$ <sub>11</sub> $\bar{a}$ <sub>34</sub> $o_j$ <sub>42</sub>	$i$ <sub>31 32</sub> $y$ <sub>51 52</sub> $e$ <sub>21 25</sub> $\bar{o}$ <sub>41 12</sub> $a$ <sub>11</sub> $e_j$ <sub>22 42</sub> $a_j$ <sub>34</sub> $o_j$ <sub>54</sub>

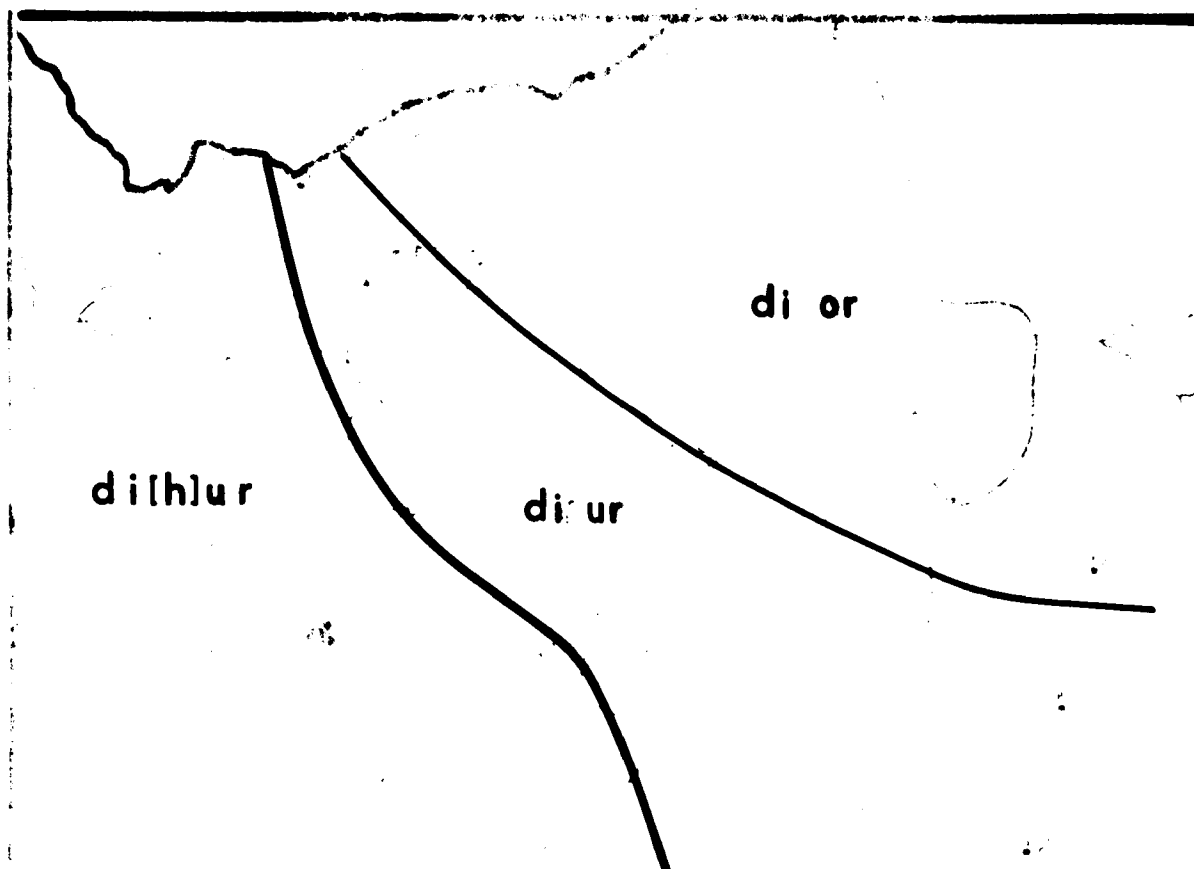


FIG.5:100 'the hair' (Functional Status of h)

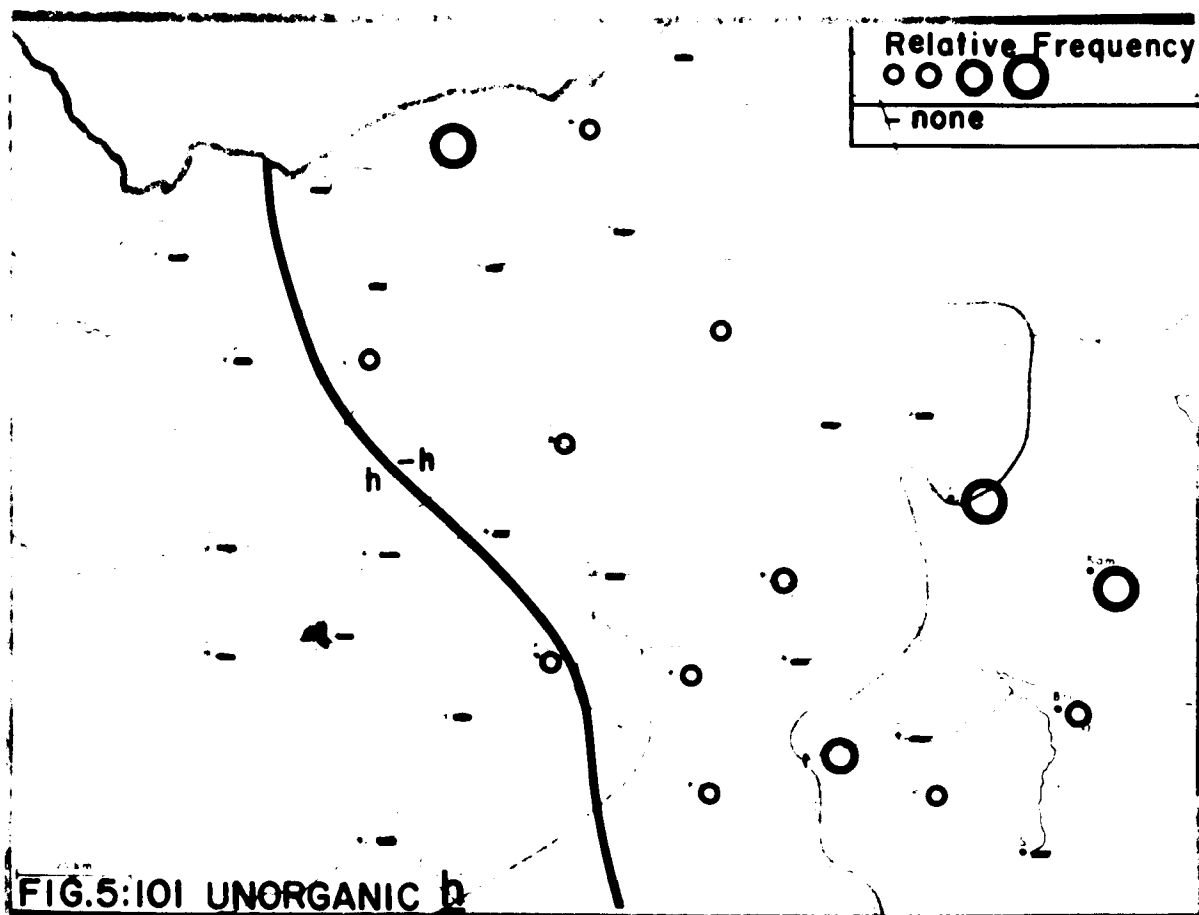


FIG.5:101 UNORGANIC D

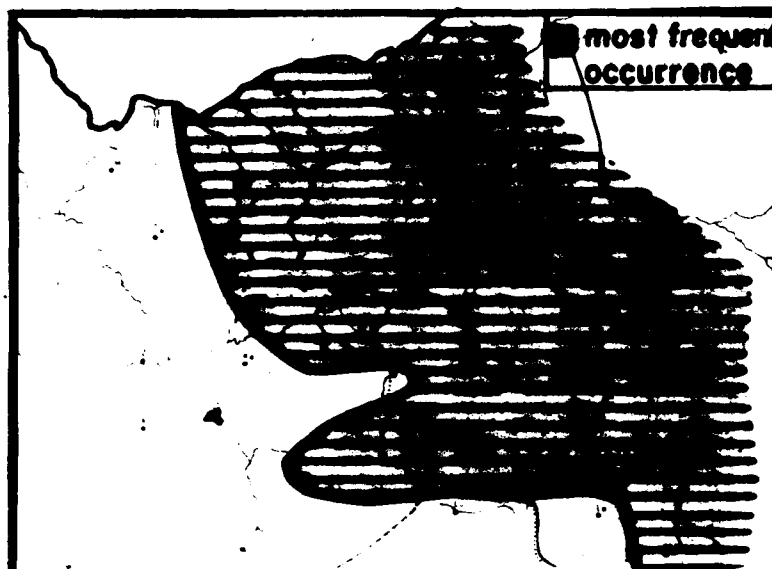


FIG. 5:102 REGRESSIVE VOICING

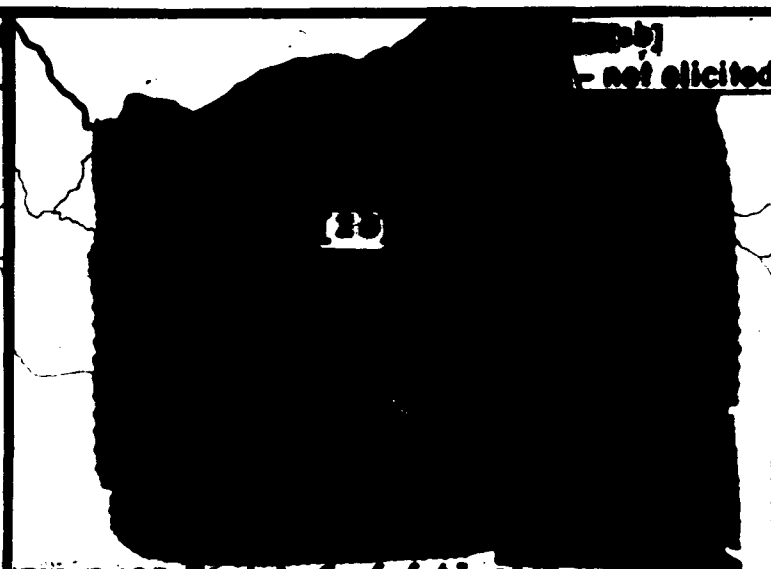


FIG. 5:103 'footstep' /u(s)lenk/



FIG. 5:104 'to love' /l(b~p) hohv/



FIG. 5:105 'child' /t/d ~ d/

Wherever it prevails we find the following contrasts: [lib] 'love', [lip] 'lip', [štub] 'house', [štup] 'push', [klejd] 'dress', [klejt] 'store'. In most of CY, where final consonants are all unvoiced, the cited forms are generally distinguished by vowel quantity alone: [lĭp] 'lip', [štĭp] 'push' vs. [līp] 'love', [štīp] 'house, room'. As a rule, [klajt] refers only to 'dress'. Its reference to 'store' is at most vestigial in CY (cf. Fig. 3:40).

It is therefore a reasonable assumption that the westward progress of distinctive voicing in word-final position was intimately bound to the advance of length elimination into Poland.

In the previously cited work (1963:101), U. Weinreich suggests that Yiddish may have acquired the possibility of distinctive word-final voicing from the East Slavic languages to which it was exposed from the middle of the 14th century. In East Slavic itself this phenomenon has, as a rule, disappeared, remaining only in Southern Belorussia and in the Northern and Eastern Ukraine. Recent information<sup>49</sup> permits the westward extension of this East Slavic voicing area to include 20 Belorussian speaking communities in the area of Bilsk in neighboring Poland.

### 5.23 Word-Final r

The loss of post-vocalic r is, to some degree, characteristic of all the speech communities in the area. Hypercorrections are thus

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<sup>49</sup>In a personal communication to Prof. Uriel Weinreich (Feb. 22, 1963) from Dr. Mieczysław Karaś of the Polish Academy of Science, Institute of Linguistics, Cracow.

inevitable, and we find both sporadic forms like [nak<sub>ə</sub>rt] 'naked', [klej<sub>ə</sub>rt] 'glows' (Std. Yid. naket, glit), and lexicalized variants distinguished, to some degree, by the presence or absence of r alone (Fig. 5:106): SY [farpl'on t/č<sub>ə</sub>t], NEY [farpl'ont<sub>ə</sub>rt] 'tangled' (cf. Pol. zapłatać). Other words display similar variation, e.g. [farkač<sub>ə</sub>n/ farka(t)š<sub>ə</sub>rn] 'to roll up sleeves' etc. (Pol. podkasać, zakasać; Belor. padkasáć; Ukr. zakásaty, dial. pidkasátysja; cf. Slawski s.v.). The alternant [farkáš<sub>ə</sub>rn] seems to be a product of NEY sibilant confusion: [(far)kás<sub>ə</sub>(r)n] 'to roll up' might easily have blended with [kás<sub>ə</sub>rn] 'to make kosher' (Std. Yid. kášern).<sup>50</sup>

The loss of r in word-final position alone is restricted to the SY area. In CY the reflex of the loss is [-e], in NCY it is [-a]. (Fig. 5:107).

A consequence of the loss in both areas is the possibility of phonemic contrasts between unstressed vowels that are not contrastable in NEY (cf. Fig. 5:108): SY [krejčme/a] 'inn-keeper', [krejčm<sub>ə</sub>/ə] 'inn'; NEY [krečm<sub>ə</sub>r] [krečme].<sup>51</sup>

We are reminded here of the [r]-less variants of Figs. 3:57, 3:38, [toka] 'turner', [rima] 'saddler'. Considered together, the illustrated distributions suggest the restoration of final [-r] in the northern portion of an area where it was formerly realized as [a].

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<sup>50</sup>The origin of the [č/š] alternation is, however, somewhat mysterious. In any case it may be a Yiddish innovation and parallels the phenomenon previously encountered in Fig. 5:28 émecer/émečer/émešer 'someone'.

<sup>51</sup>Similar contrasts are possible medially as well: SY [favind<sub>ə</sub>/at] 'amazed', [favind<sub>ə</sub>t] 'wounded'; NEY [fa(r)vund<sub>ə</sub>rt], [fa(r)vund<sub>ə</sub>t].

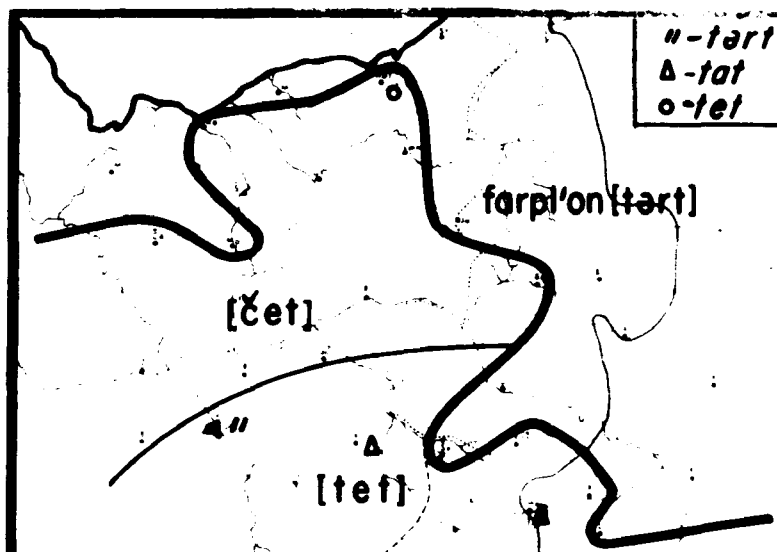


FIG. 5:106 'tangled'

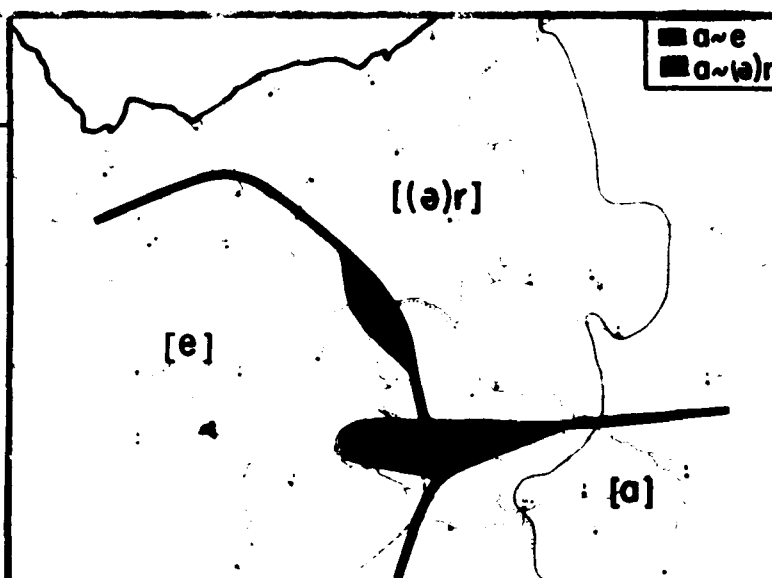


FIG. 5:107 REFLEXES OF WORD-FINAL *r*

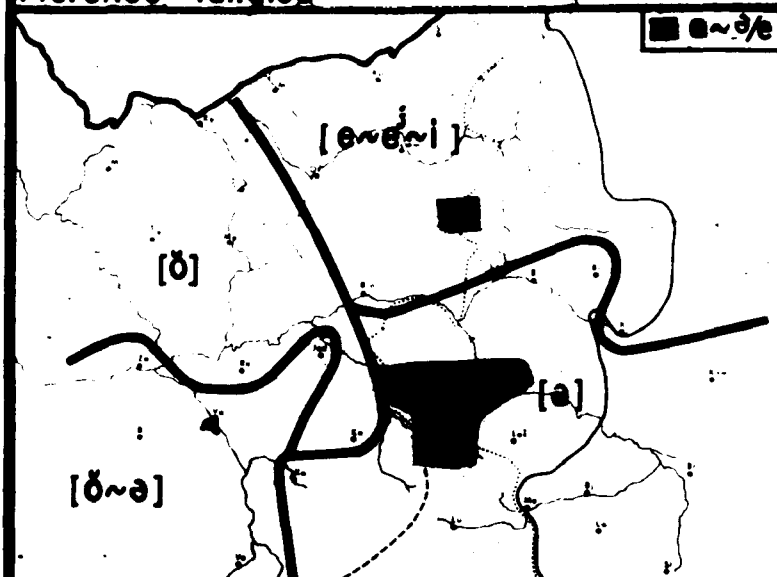


FIG. 5:108 UNSTRESSED FINAL VOWEL

LOSS OF *r*

#### 5.24 Postconsonantal t

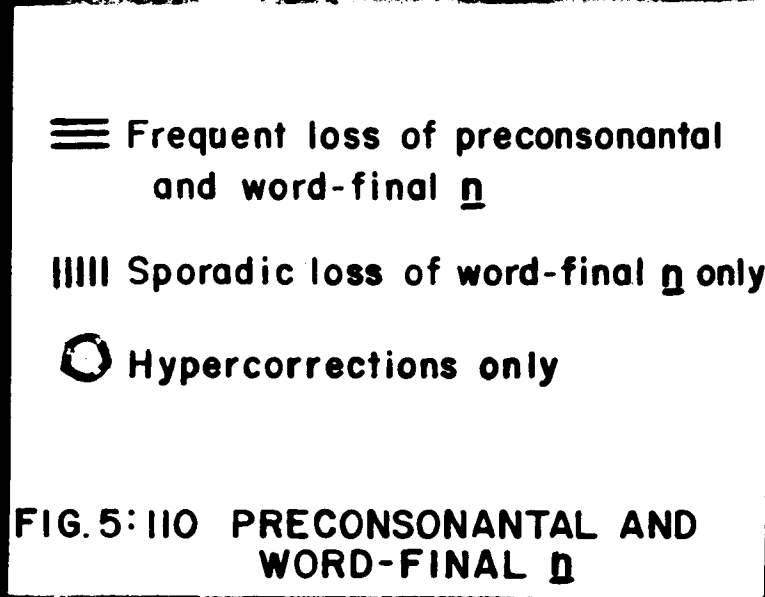
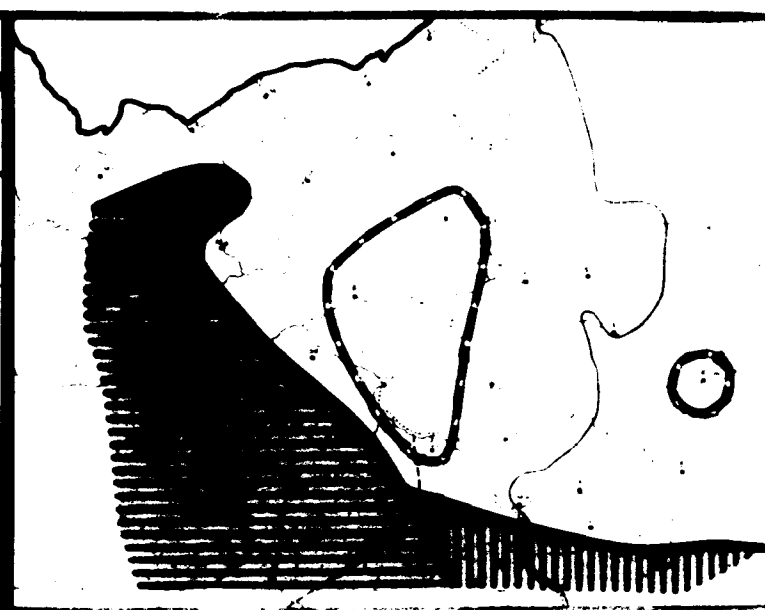
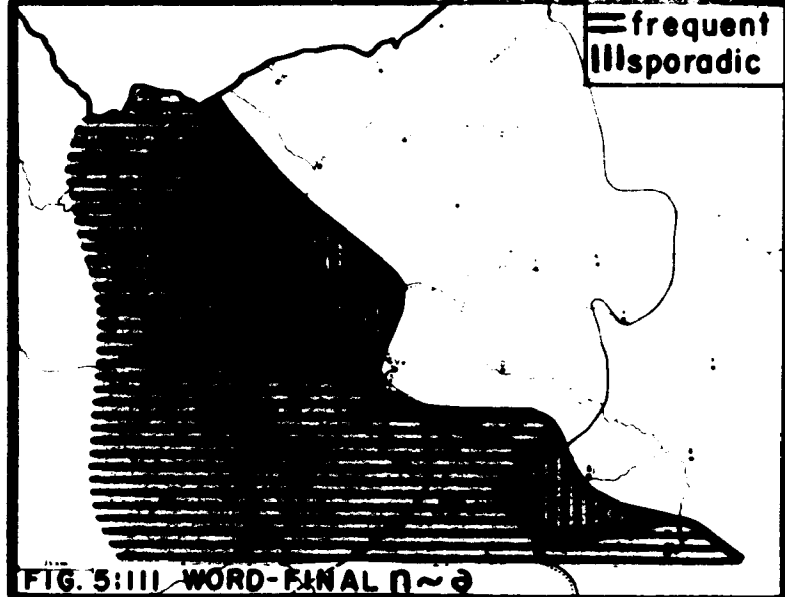
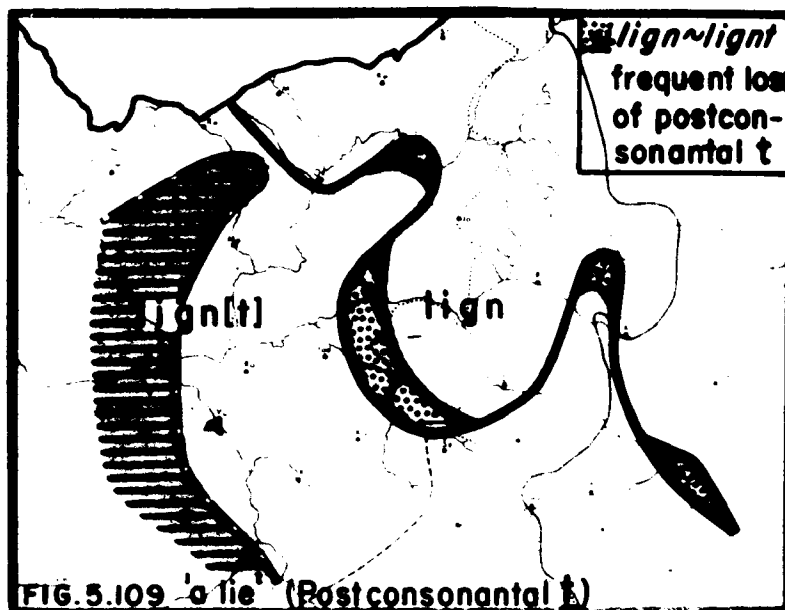
In the shaded area of Fig. 5:109 the loss of postconsonantal t, particularly in final position, and the hypercorrection which it evokes, is a common occurrence; thus we find words like [gejgn] 'neighborhood', [fōs] 'fist', [tōzn] 'thousand', and others like [šlestl] 'lock (dimin.)', [kajmult] 'never' (cf. Std. Yid. gegnt, fojst, tojznt, šlesl, kejnmol).

In at least one case this phenomenon has resulted in lexical variation that has become regionally specialized: SY [light], NEY [lign] 'a lie'. The location of the isogloss between these variants, well to the east of the shaded area, suggests that the phenomenon in question was formerly more widely distributed.

#### 5.25 Nasalization

Frequent hypercorrections also suggest that the loss of both word-final and preconsonantal n was formerly more widespread (Fig. 5:110). Even where n-dropping is no longer common, one frequently hears words like [spodink] 'type of head-gear', [poməndorn] 'tomatoes', [štrundl] 'type of baked goods', [áŋgəɾəs] 'gooseberries' (Std. Yid. spodek, pomedorn, štrudl, agres).

The shaded areas in Fig. 5:111 represent the wider distribution of a more restricted aspect of n-dropping: the alternation of syllabic [ɸ] vs. [ə] in word-final position. This occurs primarily in verbs with vowel and nasal stems. Thus [zejə] 'to see', [gəštanə] 'stood' (but cf. also [kojmə] 'chimney'). Resulting hypercorrections may be of the type [mistamɸ] 'probably' with non-etymological final [ɸ], and



≡ Frequent loss of preconsonantal  
and word-final n

|||| Sporadic loss of word-final n only

○ Hypercorrections only

FIG. 5.110 PRECONSONANTAL AND  
WORD-FINAL n



[mam̩] 'mother' with a nasalized final schwa (cf. Std. Yid. name).

### 5.26 Quality of l

In Fig. 5:112 we take no cognizance of the palatalized variant of l. Data concerning contextual palatalization as against a palatality feature remain to be sorted out. The varying qualities of non-palatal l are, however, relatively apparent: in the southwest it is generally "clear" except in final position where [l > u]; in the north it is a highly velar [ɫ] in all positions, while in Kol'ne and Stučín it is completely vocalized; i.e. initially and post-consonantly [l > w], post-vocally and finally [l > u]. Although the recorded data requires closer investigation, [l] appears to be "clear" in the central and eastern areas.

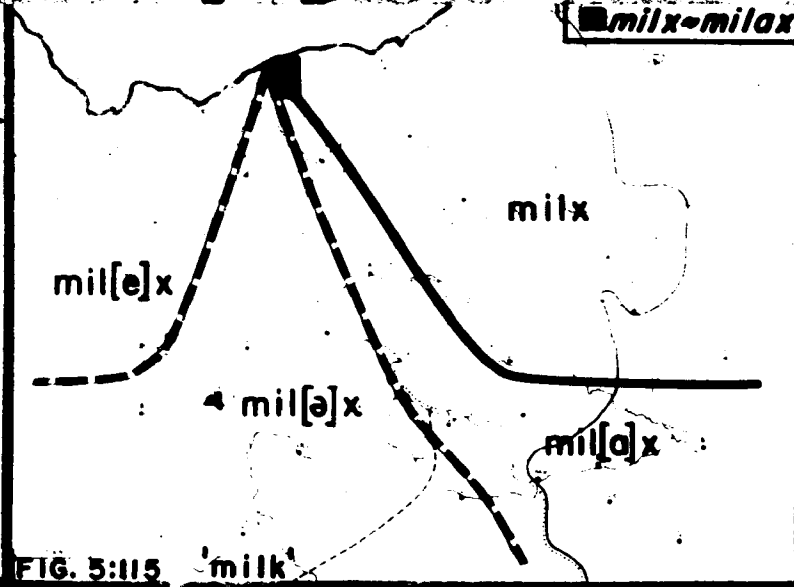
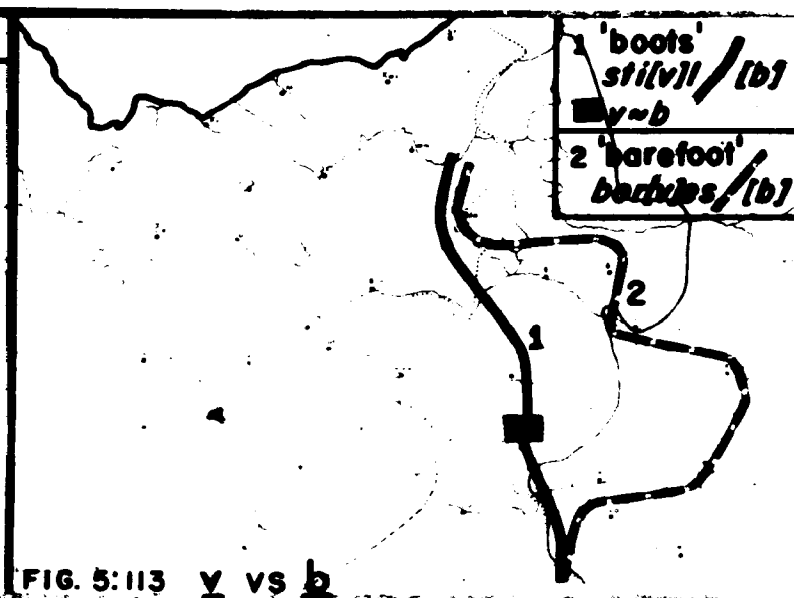
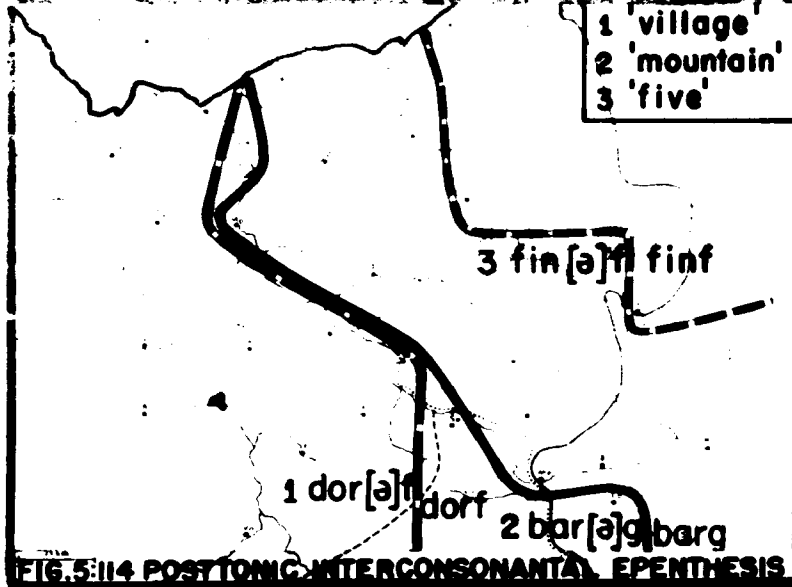
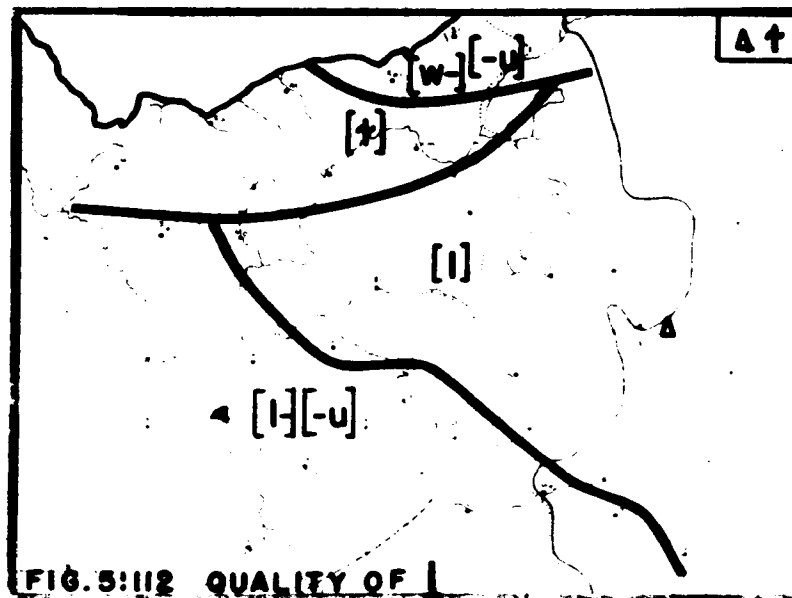
The possible relationship of the velar and vocalized variants of l to developments in the vowel system were considered earlier (§5.14.33).

### 5.27 b vs. v

The words in Fig. 5:113 are lexicalized examples of a phenomenon otherwise only sporadically encountered: [štivl/štibl] 'boots', [borves/borbes] 'barefoot'. In Standard Yiddish only the forms with v occur (but cf. [ivər] 'over' in Slávetič; Std. Yid. iber).

### 5.28 Consonant Clusters

The dissolution of final consonant clusters--with morphological consequences described in §4.3--is a phenomenon that also characterizes CY. Its normal limit is defined by the words barg 'mountain' and dorf 'village' in Fig. 5:114. In a number of lexical items, however, the



epenthetic vowel extends much further east (e.g. finf 'five').

Although there is regional variation in the quality of this vowel even in other environments, the differences are most prominent before [x] (Fig. 5:115). It is striking that, in this case, the sharpest contrast between the presence and the absence of epenthesis occurs at the very point where the two converge.

## CHAPTER 6

### HISTORICAL SYNTHESIS

#### 6.1 Introduction

##### 6.11 Criteria for the Explanation of Innovations

We have surveyed the differentiation of the Yiddish language in northeastern Poland and western Belorussia, grouping the material under systematic linguistic headings: lexicon (Chap. 3), grammar (Chap. 4), and phonology (Chap. 5); certain associated aspects of non-verbal culture were also surveyed (Chap. 2). In the course of our discussion, we have had occasion to ascribe dialect-differentiating items to a variety of causes (cf. §1.2). Some of the local and regional innovations seemed attributable to the differential effect of the coteritorial Slavic language (cf. §3.31.2); others could be plausibly interpreted as having diffused into our area from adjacent Yiddish dialects without the migration of speakers (cf. §§3.22, 3.25). A third group comprised innovations that must have been imported by Yiddish speakers migrating into the area (cf. §§3.31.1, 5.12.1). Moreover we found it probable that some innovations introduced into the local language by any of the above three mechanisms, in turn set in motion further changes within the structure to which they were introduced (cf. §4.11 ff.).

It would now be valuable to group the evidence according to

the probable causes of innovation in order to evaluate the relative importance of the cited innovation mechanisms. The intradialectal entailment of one change by another--of considerable theoretical interest to the linguist, but of limited importance in the history of our area--will be discussed in the next chapter (§7.32). Here we turn to a review of the three "external" causes.

As a preliminary, it is useful to decide what facts should be accepted as evidence for ascribing a particular innovation to one of the three external causes.

6.11.1 Local Influences From the Coteritorial Language. If an innovation in Yiddish agrees in its substance and structural form with a feature of a coteritorial Slavic language; if the innovation is so specific that a chance coincidence is unlikely; and if the geographic congruence between the feature in Slavic and Yiddish is reasonably good, we should be prepared to attribute the Yiddish innovation to borrowing. If all three conditions are not met (e.g. Polish mazurzenie lacks geographic congruence with sibilant confusion in NEY; cf. U. Weinreich 1952, 1963) it might still be necessary to reckon with borrowing and we note that there seem to be no sociocultural grounds for assuming that Slavic influence was greater in any one part of the area than in another: as far as we know, contacts between Jews and Christians in Eastern Europe were everywhere such as to permit the transmission of linguistic features from one society to the other.

6.11.2 Importation by Migration. On the other hand, if we are to explain an innovation as the result of population movement, it is not

enough to ascertain the presence of the same feature in the Yiddish of another region; in addition, we must demonstrate the historical plausibility of the presumed migratory process. Our knowledge of the history of Jewish settlement in the area under investigation is unfortunately scanty, but any reconstruction of the history of the language must be free of contradiction with the historical record. Moreover, the isoglosses attributed to migration must display significant bundling, since we cannot invoke separate and mutually contradictory migration processes to account for unbundled lines (cf. §2.0).<sup>1</sup> Before we proceed with a coherent account of the linguistic development of our area (§6.2ff.) we must therefore summarize its settlement history (§6.12).

6.11.3 Diffusion from Other Yiddish Dialects. To explain an innovation as having been diffused from an adjacent dialect is, in some respects, to invoke the weakest argument, since it is governed by fewer constraints than either of the others. The mere presence of a feature in an adjoining Yiddish dialect is *prima facie* evidence that it could have diffused from there. Furthermore, diffusional isoglosses need not bundle to the same extent as those due to migration, since the stimulus for the diffusion of a feature may be of brief duration and simultaneous stimuli could affect the diffusion of different types of features over different radii and in different directions (cf. §2.0). Nor are there any extra-linguistic grounds for accepting or for rejecting a diffusional explanation of an innovation. There are no

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<sup>1</sup>On the other hand, innovations originally due to migration may have subsequently been redistributed by diffusion.

topographic formations in our area to impede the transmission of innovations from one town to the next, and we are free to let the isoglosses speak for themselves. (To be sure, any agreements between isoglosses attributed to diffusion and the weak-contact lines shown in Fig. 2:33 would be encouraging.) Finally, disagreement between Yiddish isoglosses attributed to diffusion and Slavic isoglosses in the same area is no argument against the theory, since the diffusion of innovations in the two coterritorial societies need not have been governed by the same dynamics.

One difficulty which we must face is the possibility of diffusion in the reverse direction: theoretically, a feature originating within our area (by whatever mechanism) may have diffused outward to other regions. There is some reason to believe, in fact, that the Brest-Grodne region, with which the southeast corner of our area partly coincides, at one time functioned as the cradle of NEY and that it determined features of NEY which later spread as far as Latvia and Eastern Belorussia.<sup>2</sup> However, it is also clear that in more recent times--perhaps after the 17th century, when the center of gravity of Lithuanian Jewry shifted to the northeast--this area lost its ascendancy. In recent centuries, Brest, in the Jewish conception a symbol of Lithuania (it was traditionally called Brisk-de-Lite to distinguish it from Brisk-de-ki = Brześć Kujawski), feebly submitted to the penetration of SY phonology. The other large urban center in the area, Warsaw, which in the 19th century accumulated a larger Jewish population than any other

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<sup>2</sup>For a treatment of *oj*<sub>54</sub> in such a framework cf. U. Weinreich (1958b:261); cf. also Fig. 5:96.

European city, appears close to an isogloss as often as it does at the center of a feature area. This suggests that, for all its recent numerical weight, the city did not have the prestige or authority to influence its hinterland significantly. There are no other centers of supraregional cultural importance in our area, and we feel fairly safe in assuming an inward direction of diffusion for at least the past three centuries.

#### 6.12 Jewish Settlement of Northern Poland

No comprehensive study exists of Jewish settlement history in the area under scrutiny and little of what is available is of recent vintage. We base our tentative account largely on secondary sources; no effort has been made to evaluate the accuracy of these sources or to examine the primary documents on which they rely. On the whole, however, the sources tend to reinforce one another; their minor disagreements are noted in the discussion.

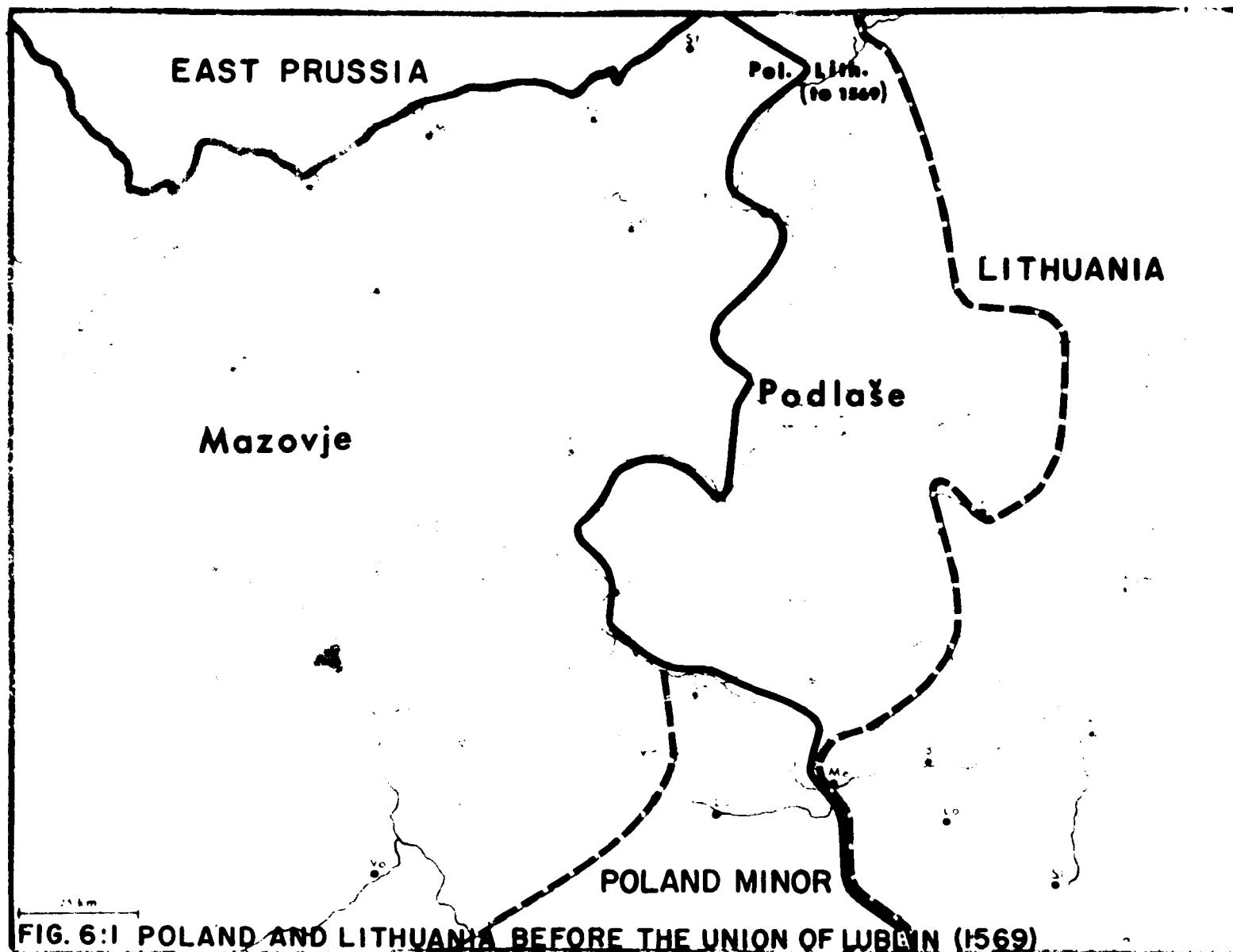
To the west of the border that separated Poland from Lithuania prior to 1569 lies the province Mazovia (Fig. 6:1); to the east is the formerly Lithuanian province Podlaże. Mazovia was the last of the independent principalities to be integrated with the kingdom of Poland.<sup>3</sup> This was not without significance for the settlement of Jews within its borders.

Jewish settlement in Poland seems to have been already in progress by the 9th century (Dubnow 1916:I, 39). It is known in any

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<sup>3</sup>By agreement, the princely estates of Mazovia, territories originally fortified by Poland, were returned to the Crown one by one as childlessness and early death pursued their rulers (Gloger 1900:131).





case that by this time Jews from the west were engaged in trade that led them eastward, through Poland, along established trade routes (Brutskus 1929:60). Early settlement at points along these routes may be assumed (Brutskus 1928:74), though in all likelihood it was relatively meager until the latter part of the 11th century when the Crusades began to uproot the Jewish communities in Germany. Refugees fled to Poland and Lithuania in steadily increasing numbers for several centuries thereafter.

In the 12th century all of Poland was open to Jewish settlement, with the exception of Mazovia (B. Mark 1957:198). We may assume that it was not in the interests of Mazovian separatism to accept settlers whose commercial and cultural ties compelled them to look beyond provincial boundaries. At the same time, lack of economic progress, as well as physical insecurity resulting from harassment on the eastern border, were not likely to prove attractive to large numbers of new settlers. It is generally accepted that those Jews who did settle in Mazovia were on the whole poorer than the Jews elsewhere in Poland (Ringelblum 1928:74).<sup>4</sup> Since the attitude of the Mazovian princes toward Jewish settlement in their domains were generally motivated by fiscal considerations alone, it is not surprising to find them pursuing largely inconsistent policies (ibid.:75). Privileges alternated with persecutions, and exclusions of one sort or another appear to have characterized the relations between Mazovia and the Jews until

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<sup>4</sup>Writing of present-day Mazovia Benet states (1951:119): "It is among the most populous and least fertile parts of Poland. Educationally and economically it is backward."

the very end of the 18th century.

Still we find some evidence of Jewish settlers in Mazovia by the 13th century: in Warsaw (Shatzky 1947:I, 19), and in Plock (to the west of our area) in 1237 (Trunk 1937:207). In view of the prevailing conditions, however, we can readily understand the gap of some two centuries that separates these earliest references from evidence of the first permanent Jewish communities in Mazovia: Čersk in 1413, and Warsaw a year later.<sup>5</sup> Before long the Jews of Warsaw were confronted with a series of expulsions, beginning in 1454, gaining intensity in 1483, and culminating in 1527 with the issuance of a privilegium de non tolerandis Judeis. This decree barred Jews from Warsaw proper until the middle of the 18th century (Ringelblum 1929:211). The final expulsion followed hard on the heels of Mazovia's adherence to the Polish Crown in 1526.

With the loss of Mazovian independence, what was to prevent the expansion of Jewish settlement to the east?

Perhaps the answer is to be found in the fact that nearly one-half of Mazovia, including large parts of the Lomze "land" (ziemia), most of the Visk "land" to the east of Lomze, and all of the Nur "land"

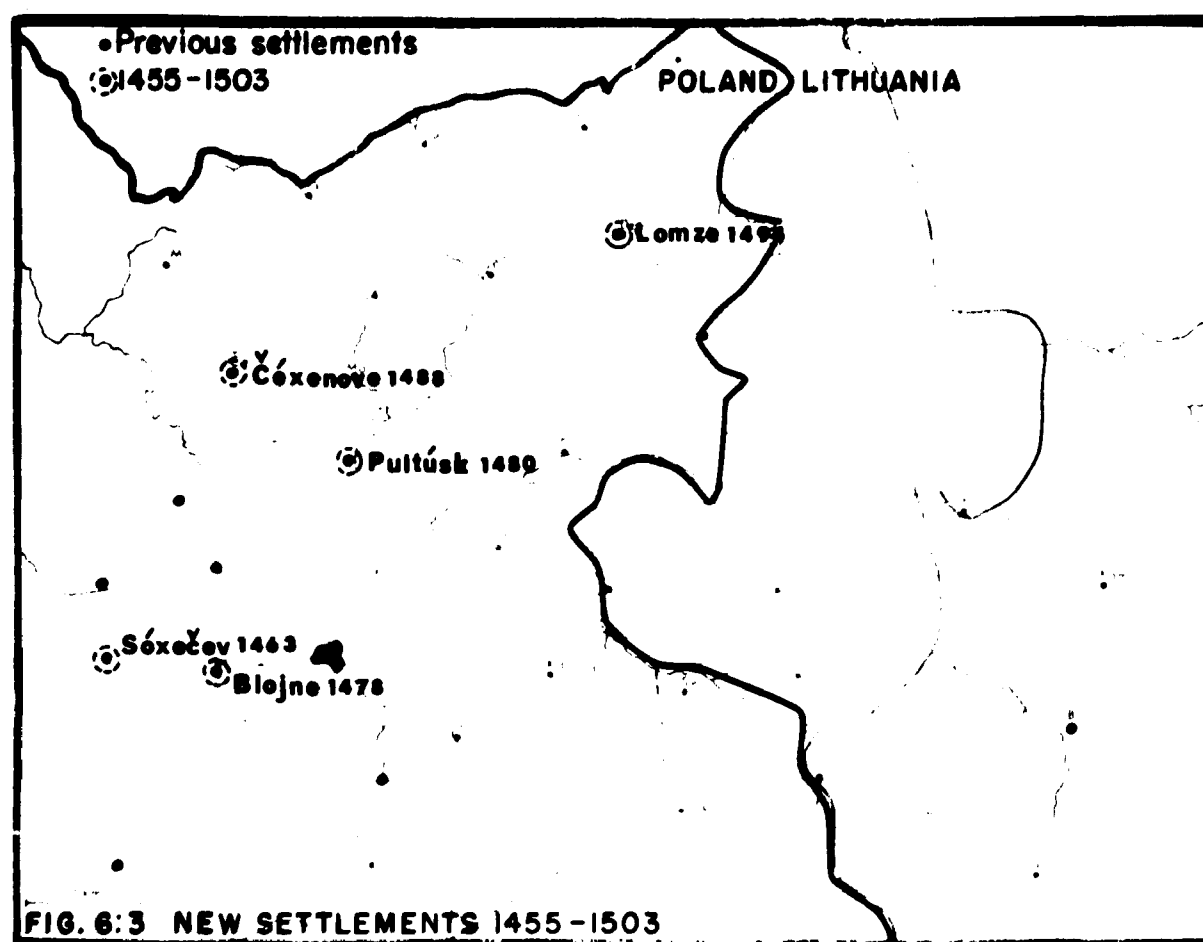
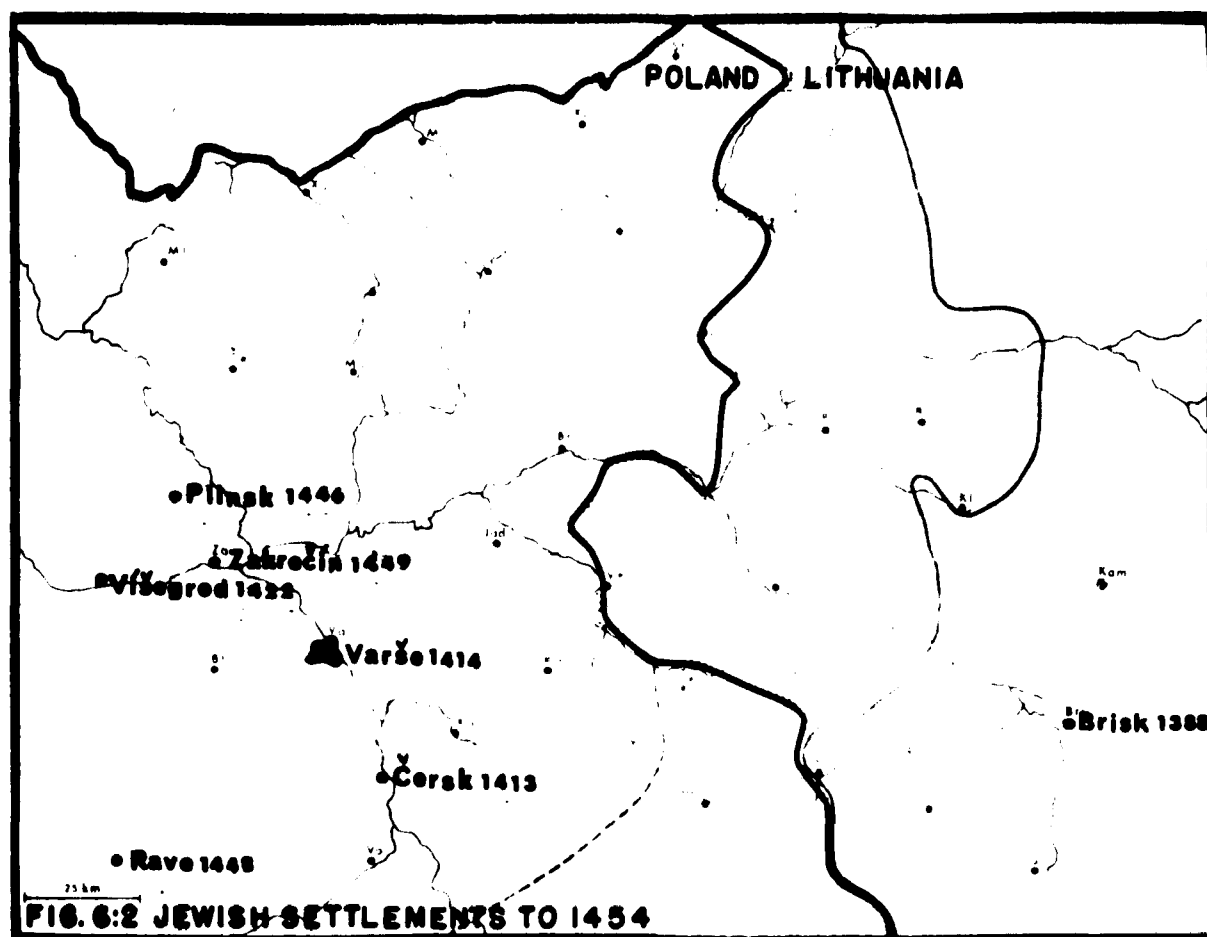
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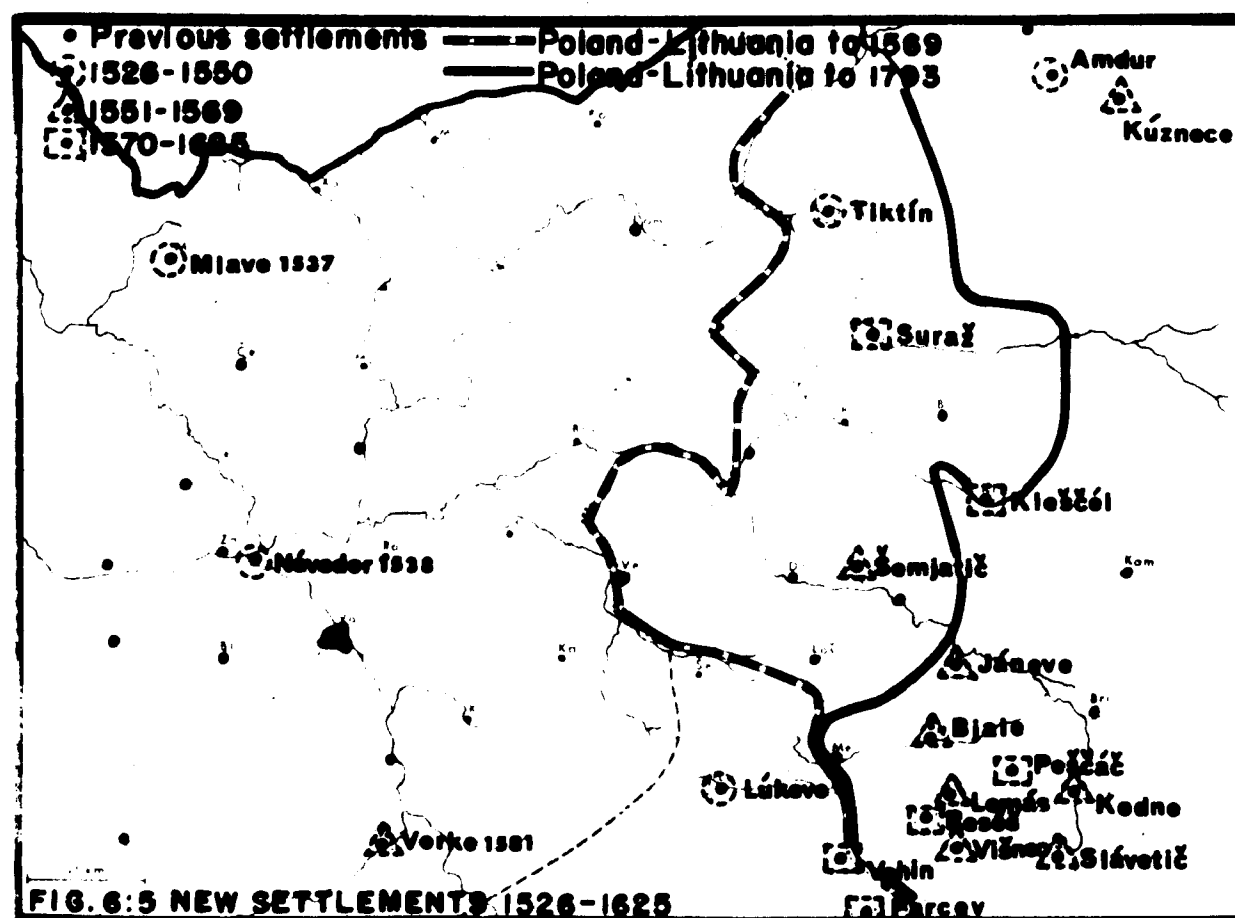
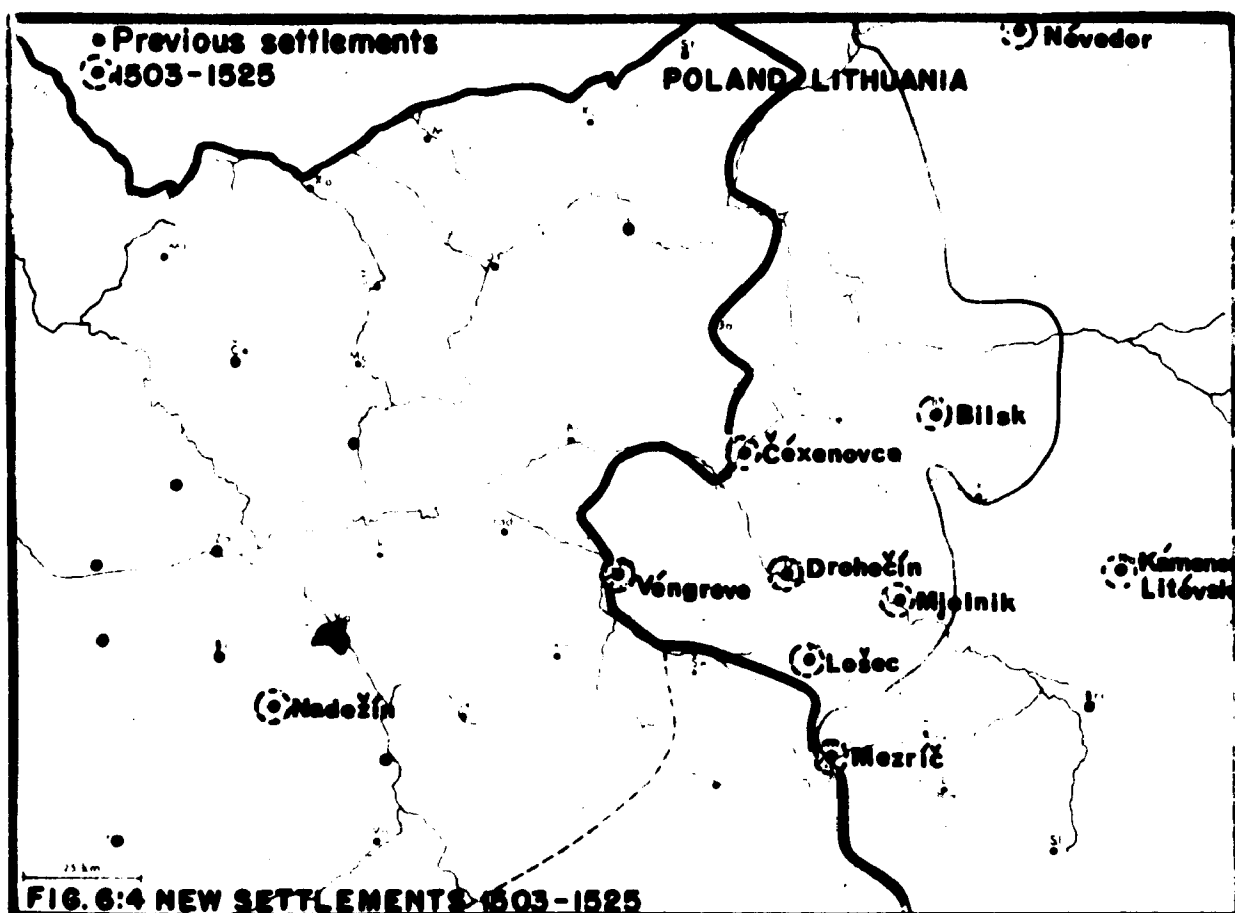
<sup>5</sup>These and subsequent dates referring to evidence of Jewish settlement have been derived from a variety of sources, particularly Schiper (1914), Ringelblum (1929), Trunk (1933) and Feldman (1934). Specific reference to one or the other will be made as a rule only in the case of significant variation among the sources. Generally speaking we can probably assume the presence of Jewish settlers in a community prior to the date for which evidence is on record. Thus the cited dates may be somewhat accidental in nature, and should probably be interpreted as marking a year by which (not necessarily in which) such a settlement was established.

to the southwest of it, was populated by rural gentry tilling its own soil without the help of serfs (ibid., 138f.). Jews forbidden to own land, and consequently dependent on the performance of intermediary functions between the nobility and its serfs, could not have survived under these conditions.

Figs. 6:2-6:5 indicate the earliest dates, prior to the middle of the 17th century, for which evidence of the Jewish communities in Mazovia and Podlaże is available. Two striking facts emerge from the composite picture. First, Jewish settlement in pre 1569 Poland appears to be restricted almost exclusively to the western part of Mazovia. (Lomze in the northeast is exceptional and will be considered separately, while Łúkeve in the southeast is not part of Mazovia.) Secondly, we can readily surmise that most of the towns settled in Mazovia, were in fact settled as a result of the expulsions from Warsaw: Sóxečev 1463, Blojne 1478, Pultúsk 1480, Čéxenove 1488, Nadežín 1525, Mlave 1537, and Nóvedvor 1538. Even towns where Jewish communities are known to have existed before the first (1454) expulsion--Plinsk 1446, Rave 1448, and Zakrečín 1449--must have absorbed substantial refugee elements after the expulsions got under way. The settlement in Višegrod, for example, first heard from in 1422, is known to have blossomed considerably after the influx of Jews from Warsaw from 1479 to 1489 (Trunk 1933:57). The others, dating from 1446 to 1449, may well have been constituted by those gifted with sensitivity to the storm warnings that generally precede catastrophic events.

A single community in the Polish northeast, Lomze, appears in the record of Jewish settlement prior to the 16th century (Schiper 1914: Map 1). What was the nature of this community? Let us consider the

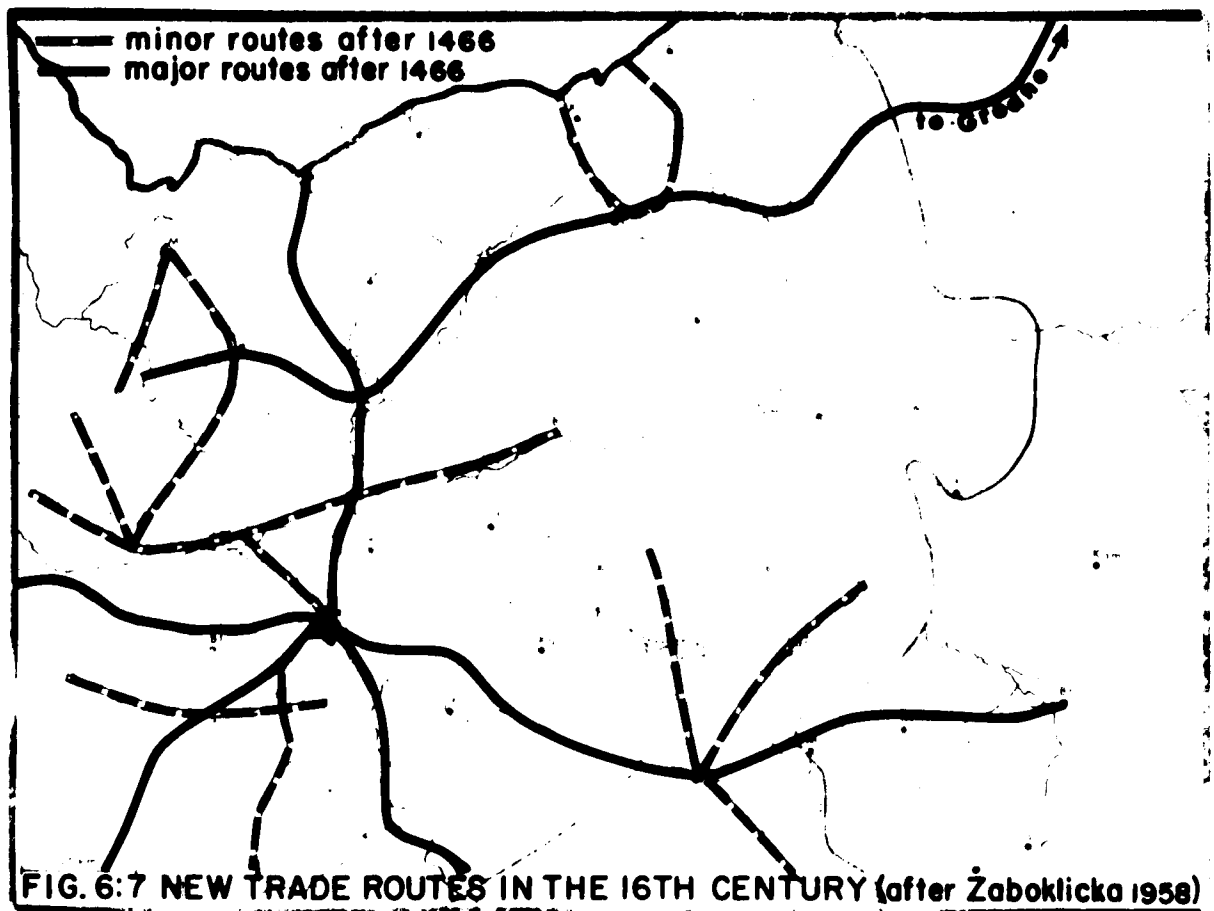
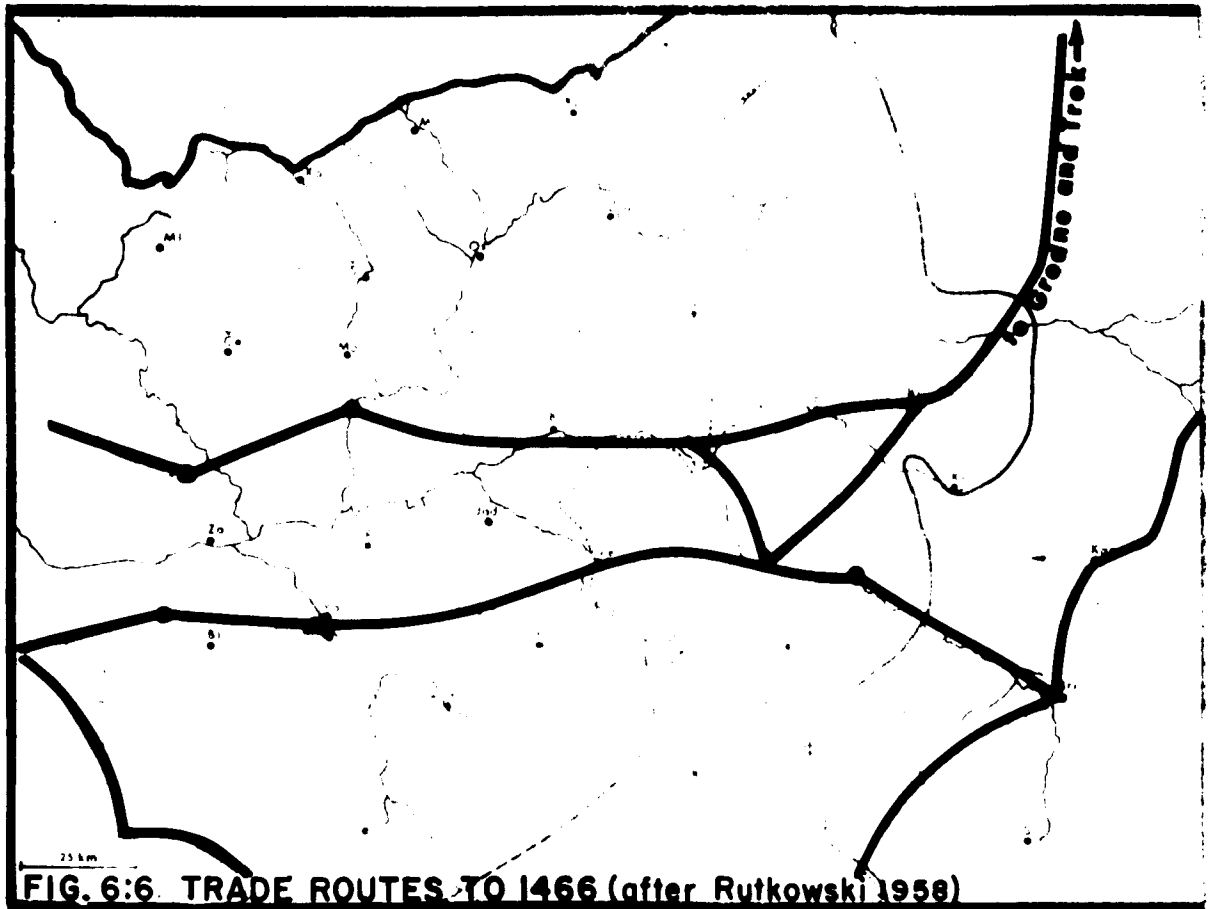




following:

The earliest known date in the history of Lithuanian Jewry is 1388. Of the five widely scattered communities on record at that time, only one, Brest, falls within the limits of our map. We indicated earlier that the first Jews to settle in Lithuania were part of the flood of refugees that began to pour out of Germany at the end of the 11th century. The trade routes depicted in Figs. 6:6-6:7 suggest the roads by which they must have travelled through Poland as they made their way to Brest, Lojck, and Ludmir in the southeast, and to Trok and Grodne in the northeast. Hostility to Jewish settlers in Mazovia encouraged them to seek the more hospitable conditions prevailing in Lithuania. The knowledge that these Lithuanian communities were settled from the west tends to obscure the fact that they precede all of the known settlements in Mazovia, some by as much as 150 years. We have no reason to believe, however, that their inhabitants were of different origin than those who stopped in Poland.

Our record is silent about a brief period in the history of Lithuanian Jewry. The eastward movement of Jews into that country came to a sudden halt when its entire Jewish community was expelled in 1495. Some of the departing exiles went to the Crimea, but most of them were granted special permission to settle in the neighboring Polish towns (Dubnow 1916:65). The identity of these towns remains a mystery. We can only infer that Lomze was one of them. It appears in our record in 1494, when the area to the west of it was still empty of Jews, and it lies close to the Lithuanian border on one of the new 16th century trade routes. Linguistic evidence in support of this



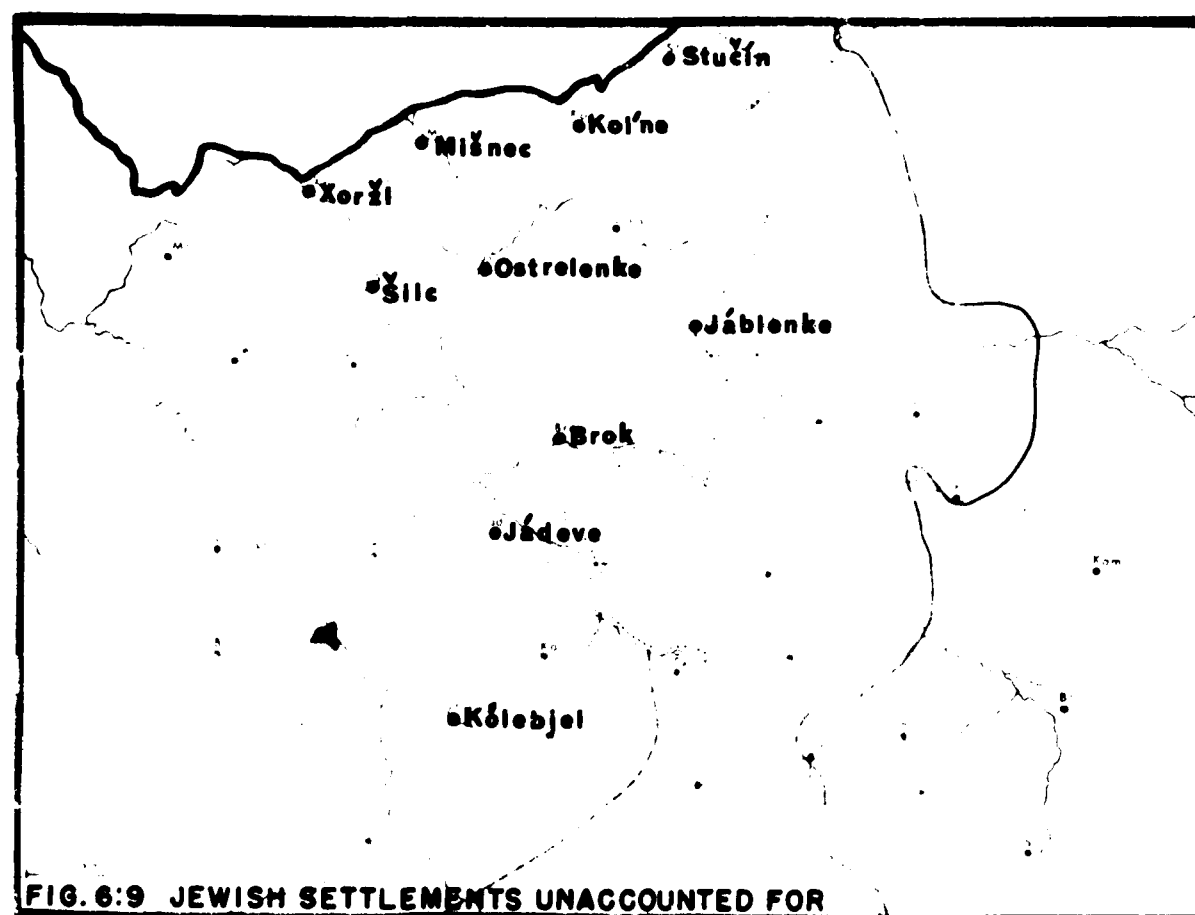
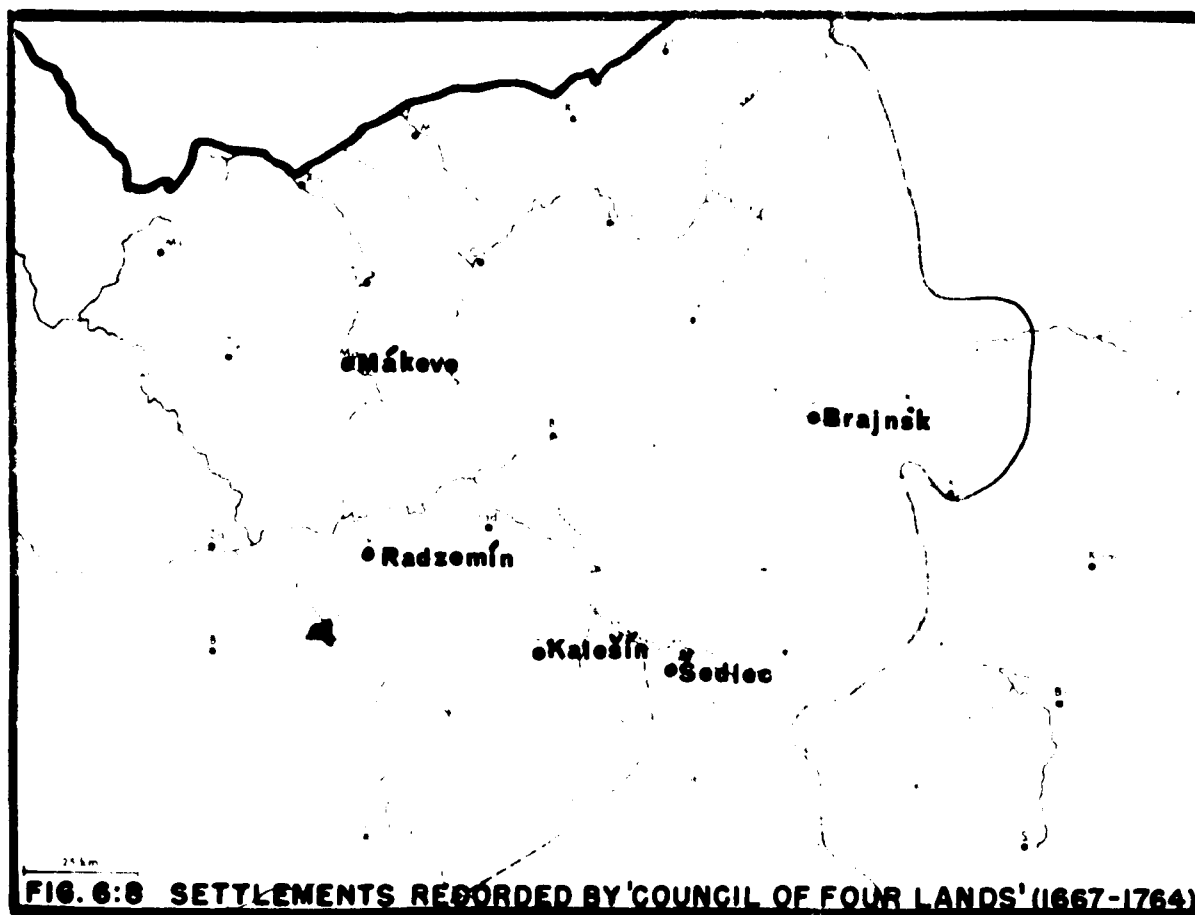


inference will be cited below.

When the exiles were permitted to return to Lithuania in 1503, there must have been many, particularly among the young, who chose to remain in Poland, though precisely where, in addition to the assumed Lomze settlement, is unknown. During the first quarter of the 16th century, many of those who did return to the original settlements from which they had been expelled, moved on to form a considerable number of new communities in the Lithuanian province of Podlaŝe (cf. Fig. 6:4). When Poland and Lithuania concluded the "Union of Lublin" in 1569, this province, for centuries a subject of dispute between the two countries, was ceded to Poland. The number of Jewish settlements now appears to increase in the Lithuanian south (Fig. 6:5).

In compiling our settlement maps, we sought information pertaining to all the towns in the area, and not alone to the modest subset from which our linguistic data was derived. Yet we have failed to account not only for a large number of towns in the latter group, but for the entire area in which most of them lie, the area between Podlaŝe and the eastern limit of Jewish settlement established in the course of the Warsaw expulsions.

Some of the sample towns that remain unaccounted for (Fig. 6:8) appear in the acts of the Jewish "Council of Four Lands" (Halperin 1945). Brajnsk, in well settled Podlaŝe, is first mentioned in 1669 (*ibid.*:109), while Mákéve, in Mazovia, does not appear in the records until 1753 (*ibid.*:384). Šedlec in Poland Minor, and Radzemín and Kalešín in Mazovia, occur undated on an accompanying map (Halperin 1945) covering Jewish settlements in Poland for the period 1667 to 1764. (In the text,



however--P.LXXIX--we encounter a reference to Šedlec in 1766.)

Thus we have been unable to account for the establishment of Jewish settlements in nearly one-third of our sample towns. All of them are in Mazovia (Fig. 6:9): Xoržl, Šilc, Ostrelenke, Brok, Jádeve, Kólebjel, Jáblenke, Stučín, Kol'ne, and Mišnec. This may seem less surprising in the light of a decision by the Jewish "Council of Four Lands" as late as 1669, forbidding Jews to settle in Warsaw, and echoing a Council decree of several decades earlier, forbidding them to settle anywhere in Mazovia. In general such decrees seem to be an attempt by the Jewish authorities to reinforce the prevailing policy of the Polish Crown (Ringelblum 1929:225).

For some of the settlements missing from our record, the Polish geographical dictionary enables us to establish terminal dates. Xoržl was founded in 1542 (SG I, 634), Jádeve in 1660 (III, 362), and Stučín in 1690 (XI, 862). (The sites of Jádeve and Stučín had previously been occupied by villages.) In 1860, two-thirds of the inhabitants of Kol'ne (IV, 266) and of Šilc (*ibid.*:638) were Jews. Three of the five remaining towns, Jáblenke, Kólebiel, and Mišnec, hardly receive passing mention; a fourth, Ostrelenke was granted municipal privileges in 1427 (VII, 690f.); the fifth, Brok--founded in 1505--was barred to all but Christians until 1795 (I, 376).

The first documentary mention of communities can never give us a wholly accurate picture of settlement history. Nor can we rely fully on the implications of documented restrictive decrees. Jews in very small numbers may have resided even where the law forbade them to live. Certainly they may have lived quietly in places for which there

is simply no record (cf. fn. 5). The absence of records sometimes reflects nothing more than the absence of a place of worship or of a cemetery. This may help account for certain contradictory evidence. While one source (SG IV, 135) tells us that only Christians lived in Kleśceł before 1775, another (Feldman 1934) documents a Jewish community there in 1580, and a third (Schiper 1914: Map 3) as some time prior to 1569.

Despite such reservations, the patterns that emerge from documentary evidence cannot be ignored. They must reflect something of reality. We surmise therefore that the "missing" communities were settled, on the whole, not much earlier than the end of the 18th century. Their settlement may well be considered a by-product of the large scale Jewish population movements in Poland which led to the depletion of the northeastern provinces and the filling of those in the southwest. These mass migrations are already well documented in the 19th century. Thus, we find, that while the number of Jews in Poland increased from approximately 524,000 in 1843 to 815,000 in 1870, the percentage of those residing in the northeast was reduced from 61.8 to 46.8 (Schiper 1937:461).

Such data, however, reveal nothing of the small-scale local developments that must have accompanied the overall movement. For example, a town like Radzemiń whose total population in 1827 was 153 (SG III, 728), had increased the number of its inhabitants to 4,566 by the year 1861, of whom 3,958 were Jews. Only internal migration, particularly of Jews, can possibly explain so great a population increase in so short a time. Similar developments undoubtedly gave rise to many new

Jewish settlements and swelled the ranks of those previously established.

We can now attempt to relate the geographic structure of Yiddish in our area to the known settlement history and to plausible processes of diffusion and borrowing.

## 6.2 The Major Discontinuity

### 6.21 Formation of the Discontinuity in Yiddish

Chief among the regional differences in our area are those that set off the (north)**east** from the (south)**west**. Thus we can hardly avoid taking Isoglosses 1 and 2 as representative of the most important diagnostic features for any classification of EY dialects; they are reinforced time and again on every level of the language. Isogloss 3, supported primarily by lexical evidence, also delimits a number of grammatical differences (cf. Figs. 4:40, 4:82). While it touches upon phonological phenomena only rarely (cf. Figs. 5:108-5:109), it rounds out, as Fig. 6:10 shows, the picture of east-west discontinuity presented previously (Fig. 5:99).<sup>6</sup>

How can we explain the location of these isogloss bundles, separately as well as severally? We will try to show that the fundamental cause of the discontinuity lies in the two separate settlement currents which confronted each other approximately along Isogloss 1; and that the other lines are the results of "adjustment" either by **minor** migrations (on a scale too small to permit reconstruction) or

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<sup>6</sup>The lines in Fig. 6:10, labeled "Isogloss 1, 2, 3", are merely abstractions of the isogloss bundles in Figs. 5:99 and 3:16.

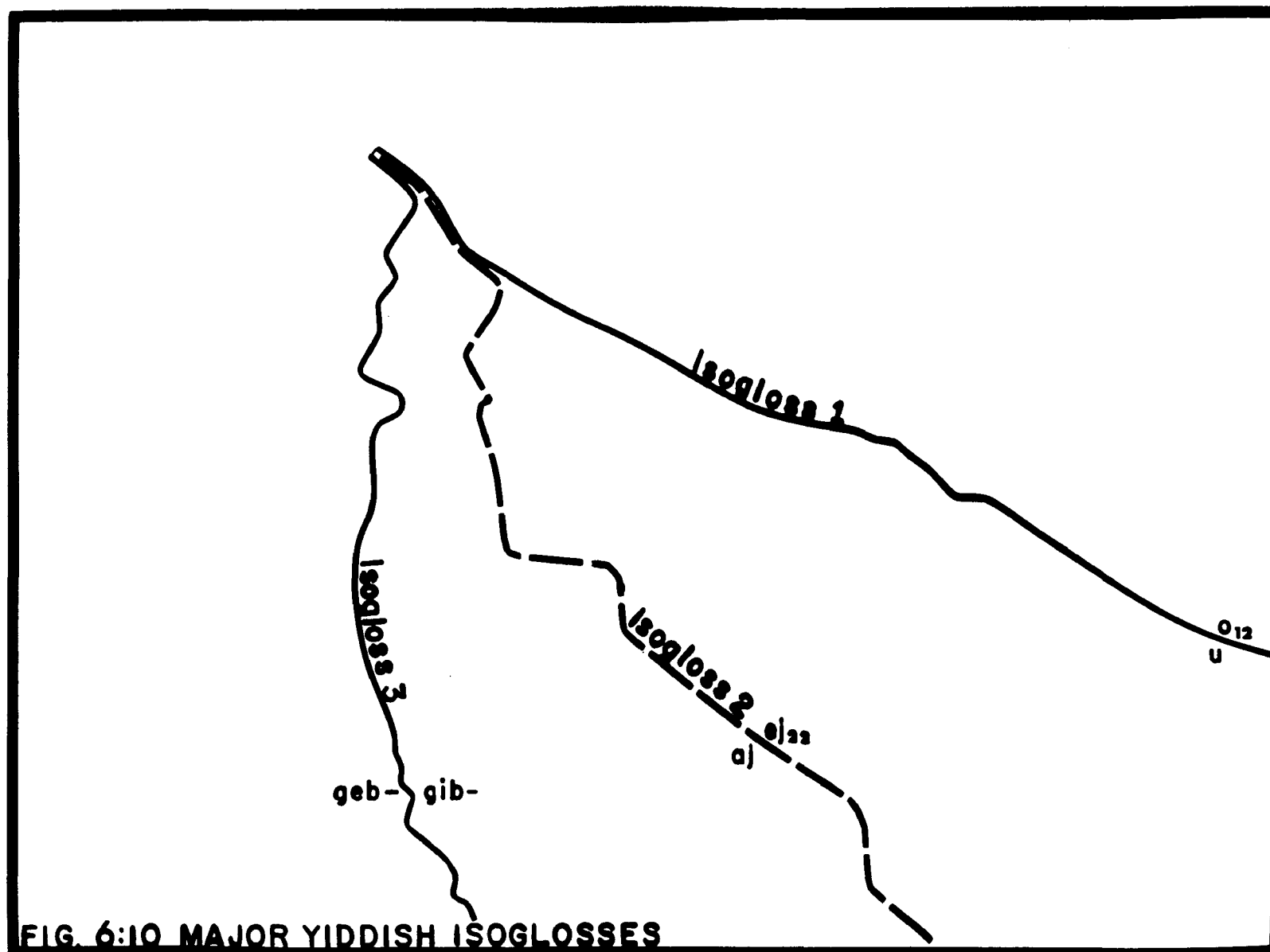
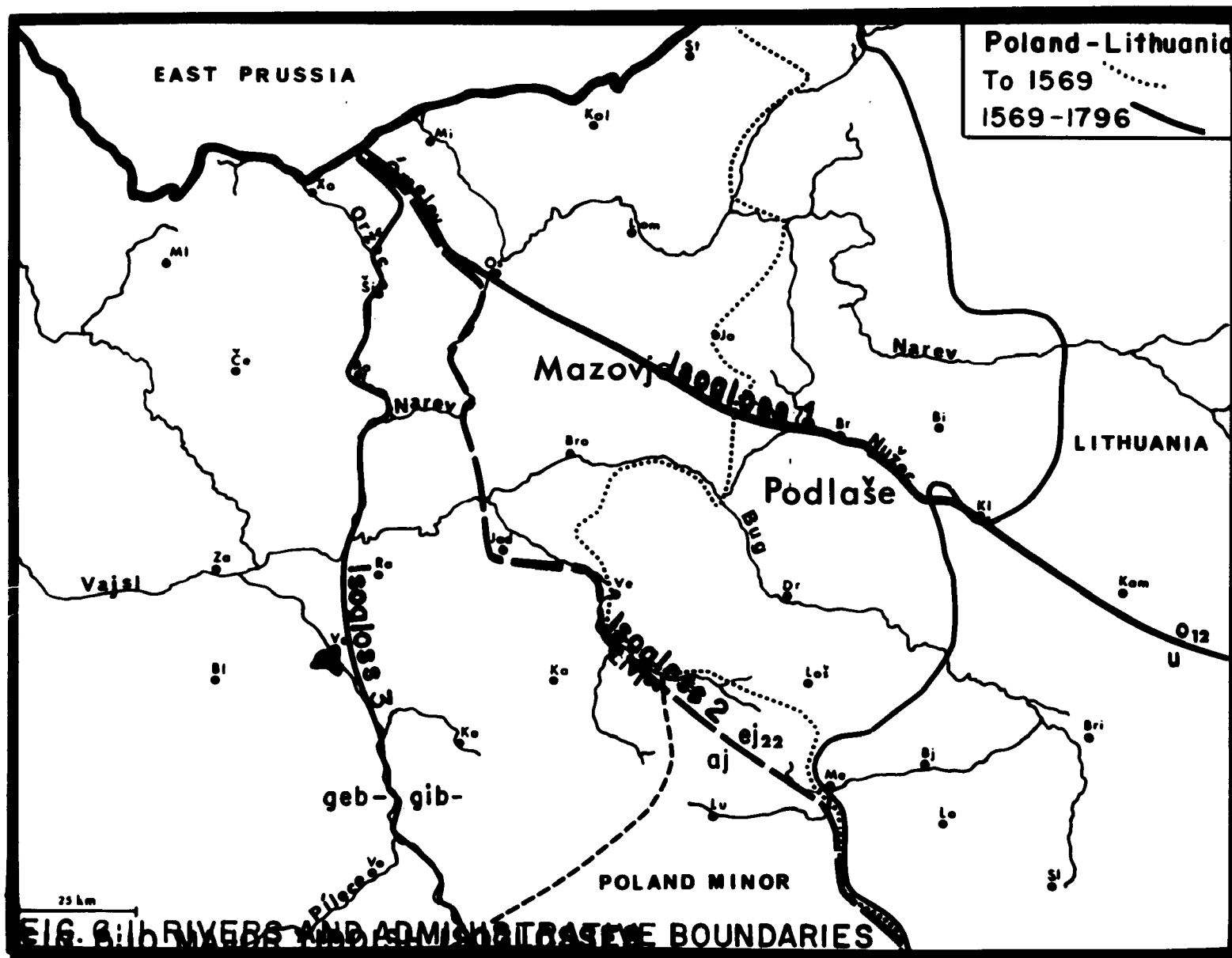


FIG. 6:10 MAJOR YIDDISH ISOGLOSSES







by diffusion.

The history of settlement suggests that until 1503, there were scattered communities to the west of present-day Isogloss 2 and none to the east of it (Figs. 6:2-6:3). We may assume that in those settlements, the same dialect was used as in the rest of Poland (to the extent that a consolidated dialect existed at the time) and that this dialect corresponded approximately to Proto-SY (cf. Table 7). We can imagine, for example, that phonemes 51 and 52, PEY <sup>u</sup> u, whose fronting is attested for the Yiddish of Germany as far back as the 14th century, already appeared in their fronted forms in 15th century Western Mazovje<sup>7</sup>--again, insofar as a uniform phonology can be ascribed to the Yiddish of the time.

It is worth observing that no Jewish communities were founded between 1488 and 1503; the quiescence of the settlement movement in that decade and a half serves as a significant milestone for periodization purposes. The one exception is Lomze, first recorded in 1494, and probably constituting the only Lithuanian Jewish incursion into Mazovia.

When the Jews were expelled from Lithuania in 1495, they probably headed for Polish centers of refuge by the shortest routes. Those from Trok and Grodne may have gone to Lomze--a community whose north-eastern character we have no reason to suspect in any period. Those from Brest and towns south of the Pripet River (Lojck, Ludmir) may have headed for Lublin province, where Jews had been settled as far back as

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<sup>7</sup>It is clear, however, that these scattered speakers with <sup>u</sup> y 51 52 had no effect upon NEY in the small number of widely separated communities of Lithuania.

the 11th century (B. Mark 1957:176). This laid the ground, after their return in 1503, for the north-south split in the old Grand Duchy that opened the Ukraine--including any earlier settlements of NEY speakers that may have existed there--to SY and left ethnic Lithuania and Belorussia as the sole domain of NEY.

The return of the Jews to the Grand Duchy was apparently viewed as permanent, and favored the establishment of new communities at a rapid pace. The one hundred years that followed saw the settlement of Podlaše. In the first five decades (to 1550), the new communities sprang up chiefly in the north and center of the province (Fig. 6:4); from 1551 to 1625, our map (Fig. 6:5) shows the rise of fresh settlements in the southern corner of Podlaše (essentially the northwesternmost outpost of the Ukraine)--a development which points suggestively to the general movement at that time of Polish Jews into the Ukraine (cf. Etinger 1956:113ff.).

It seems perfectly reasonable to relate the bisection of Podlaše by Isogloss 1 to the origin of the settlers: Lithuanian Jews in the north, Polish Jews in the center and south. The development of new trade routes in the 16th century (Fig. 6:7) is not inconsistent with this reconstruction: a new route from Grodne into northern Podlaše and a new route from Warsaw to Brest with arteries reaching northward into the province. Some time later, undetected by any records (see Fig. 6:9), the westward push of Lithuanian Jews swept beyond northern Podlaše into northeastern Mazovia and for some reason came to rest along the river Ómelev. To sum up: before the 16th century, SY was bounded roughly by the Bug river and, north of it, by what is now

Isogloss 3. NEY was bounded by the border between Lithuania and Podlaŝe. Though there may have been loose contact between them along the upper Bug, they were separated by an area empty of Jews in Mazovia and Podlaŝe. After the 16th century, the westward expansion of NEY in the north and the eastward expansion of SY in the south brought them into frontal contact along the line which is now Isogloss 1. Of course the front line between SY and NEY may originally have lain elsewhere and its precise present location may be due to fusional adjustments in situ; or mixed migrations may at first have yielded a dialectally more motley area in central Podlaŝe, which only later split into two, depending on the north-eastern or southwestern orientation of particular features (cf. Figs. 5:91-5:96). Of course, we have no more independent reason for considering the location of Isogloss 1 a "natural" barrier to cultural irradiation than to migration, yet we have observed its efficacy as a major divide even in the area of non-verbal culture (cf. Fig. 2.4).

Isogloss 2 is the easternmost boundary of a sizable number of features which, within the SY dialect group, differentiate CY from SEY. Some of them are almost certainly importations from WY dialects in Germany and Austria that, for some reason, were not imported north-east of this line. Alternative explanations come to mind: either the fresh innovations in the Yiddish of Poland southwest of Isogloss 2 were due to more or less uniform settlement, after the middle of the 16th century, in existing communities all over Poland, including those just southwest of Isogloss 2, but not northeast of it; or else the Yiddish of Poland continued to evolve (perhaps under the stimulus of continuing ~~immigration from the~~ west for about another hundred years

after the middle of the 16th century), and the innovations continued to spread, wave-like, in all directions, coming to a halt roughly along Isogloss 2. The very loose bundling from which we have abstracted Isogloss 2 in Fig. 6:10 (cf. Fig. 5:99) suggests that diffusion of individual innovations is likely to have been the mechanism by which CY came to be differentiated from the rest of SY. Many of the specific isoglosses clustering along this line are structurally interrelated and the entailment of one change by another may have had much to do with the geography of certain features (cf. §7.32).

The southernmost segment of Isogloss 2 coincides with the Polish-Lithuanian boundary both before and after the Union of Lublin (1569) and thus has a reasonable grounding in political barriers to free communication. Between Mezříč and Věngreve the isogloss follows first the boundary between Podlaše and Poland Minor, then the boundary between Podlaše and Mazovia, i.e. the state boundary between Poland and the Grand Duchy which, after 1569, was reduced to a provincial line within the Kingdom. As is shown by Fig. 6:4, the communities of central Podlaše, i.e. those lying between this segment of Isogloss 2 and Isogloss 1, were established in the years 1503-1525. If we could assume that after 1569 there would no longer have been any political reason for innovations from the southwest to come to a halt along Isogloss 2, we could propose that the major CY innovations reached this region after 1525 but before 1569. If, on the other hand, further study of 16th century social history should make it likely that the provincial line did remain a barrier to intimate contacts even after the Union of Lublin, the terminus ante quem would have to be advanced

accordingly. The eastern limit of Hasidism, congruent with Isogloss 1 and datable to a much more recent period (cf. Fig. 2:3), favors the first alternative.

North of Vėngreve, Isogloss 2 follows the course of various streams: the Livjec, the Narev, and, congruently with Isogloss 1, the Ómelev. In fact, the correspondence between the major isogloss bundles and the rivers--further instanced by the location of Isogloss 3 along the Ómelev, the Oržec, and the Vistula (Yid. Vajsl; cf. Fig. 6:10-6:11)--is something of a puzzle.<sup>8</sup> These streams are not even navigable commercial arteries which might serve as channels of innovation--much less impassable barriers to cross-country communication. Perhaps we might seek an explanation in the facts of Polish history. We learn from Gloger (1900:132) that of the early units of Polish social organization, the only ones with any permanent territorial or political character were those whose limits were defined by rivers and streams, i.e. the ziemie or "lands" that lay between the waters and swamps. Thus the early Polish settlers seem to have occupied both sides of the waters, taking no serious notice of them until they were subsequently confronted with the problem of delimiting administrative powers. The Jews, on the other hand, settled the same territory only after the

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<sup>8</sup> Lest the precision of the congruence be exaggerated, it is useful to recall that in the drawing of the isoglosses a certain margin of error must be reckoned with. Unless every point between two investigated localities is also examined, a line purporting to represent a linguistic boundary between the known communities, may in fact be slightly misplaced (cf. §1.44). Despite inaccuracies at any of its points, a balance is probably achieved when the entirety of the line is considered. On this assumption we have chosen to draw our isoglosses as close to the rivers and political boundaries as the data will permit. The fact that so close a correspondence emerges when we do so, is a tribute to the data itself rather than to our own artistry.

administrative divisions and attendant restrictions had already become effective. Indeed, allowing for the margin of error in the location of our isoglosses (§1.44), the latter correspond very well with the boundaries of Polish "lands" and principalities that run through the area (Gieysztorowa 1958).

The location of Isogloss 3 also raises interesting problems. On the one hand it separates the oldest Jewish settlements of western Mazovia from the more recent ones (cf. Figs. 6:2-6:3) and suggests that the archaic features lie to the west of it. On the other hand, the shape of the area between it and Isogloss 2 makes it extremely improbable that this narrow wedge could have constituted the total range of specific innovations. The configuration of isoglosses in Fig. 6:10 suggests only that the lines represent the outward circumferences of successive, roughly concentric waves of innovation. Perhaps the relative antiquity of the West Mazovian communities did endow them with a long-lasting affinity for the Jewish areas still further west (Poland Major) and thus disposed them to accept fresh innovations from the west and southwest which would not penetrate the more recent settlements of Mazovia and Podlaŝe. This account, by the way, fits well with the regional network of trade routes displayed in Fig. 6:7.

#### 6.22 Bilingual Dialectology: Yiddish-Slavic Congruences and Differences

In an excess of enthusiasm, some early investigators (especially Shpilreyn 1926:7) proposed that the differences between NEY, CY, and SEY, corresponded geographically with those between the coterritorial Slavic languages (cf. §1.2). It is a fact, of course, that the area of our investigation which encompasses the meeting of all three major dialects

of EY, also contains the point at which Polish, Belorussian, and Ukrainian fan out. As we have shown, however (§3.3ff.), the correspondence is far from congruent.

In contrast to the relatively clear manifestation of the break between NEY and SEY, the boundary between Belorussian and Ukrainian is fairly conventional and indefinite. We will be on surer ground if we restrict our comparison of Yiddish dialect boundaries with the East Slavic-West Slavic divide, i.e. with the boundary between Belorussian and Ukrainian on the one hand and Polish on the other.

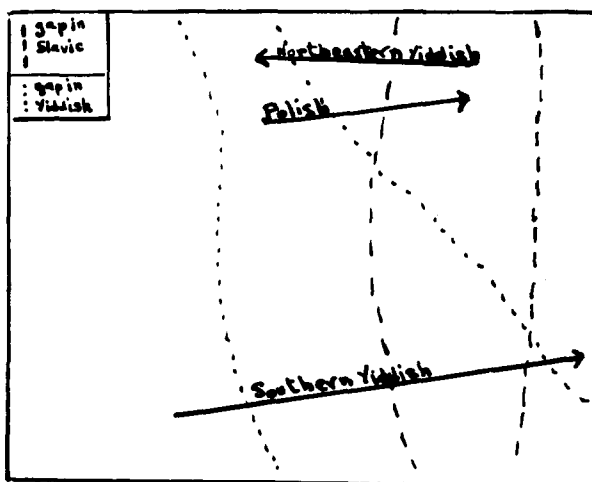
For several centuries, West and East Slavs were separated, at least in the area under study here, by pagan tribes (Jadźwingi). This physical separation facilitated the differentiation of Polish and East Slavic without the rise of significant transitional phenomena. When the Jadźwing raids subsided in the 13th century, Podlaśe was colonized from two directions. The westerners, from Mazovia, settled both in the north and the south, while Slavs from the east seem to have settled primarily in the area to the north of the river Nužec, in Bilsk and Kléščel for example (Gloger 1900:202). Thus Polish and Belorussian came to be delimited roughly at this point, although Polish pushed eastward into the Jágestov region (Nitsch 1923:425).

During the period of physical separation between West and East Slavic, i.e. until the 13th century, Jewish settlement both in Poland and Lithuania must still have been relatively insignificant. However, these two major states of Eastern Europe did, in the Jewish case as in the Slavic one, constitute the geographic basins in which

separate linguistic formations could crystallize. Although the decisive effects of the Polish-Lithuanian political separation upon the language of the Jews follows by some three centuries its effects upon the Slavs, a common causal factor is undeniable.

For nearly two centuries after West and East Slavic had made contact, NEY and SY will remained separated by a wedge of territory unpopulated by Jews. But the "emptiness" of the intervening area was caused, in the Jewish case, not by pagan raiders, but by the exclusion of settlers on the part of East Mazovian gentry. Furthermore, while the Slavic gap was located in Podlaŝe, the Jewish separation occurred further west, in East Mazovia.

The closing up of previously separated territories yielded different results in Yiddish and Slavic (cf. diagram below). Whereas there was a strong eastward push of Polish in the north, and relative stability in the center and south of the area, we find, on the contrary a westward push of NEY in the north and an eastward push of SY in the south. This baffling difference in the dynamics of the two languages invites further investigation by social historians.





When we confront the Yiddish isoglosses with intra-Polish dialect boundaries in the same area (Fig. 6:12 and following key; reproduced from Urbančzyk 1962, Map 1) we are struck by their near-total discrepancy. This is in sharp contrast to the parallelism between SEY and Ukrainian (U. Weinreich 1958a:403ff.). Even isoglosses which represent parallel phenomena in both languages, e.g. in Yiddish the merger of all high front vowels (cf. Fig. 5:97) and in Polish the merger of [i] and [u] (cf. Fig. 6:12, Isogloss a), are highly disparate. The general disparity is accentuated by the tendency of the isoglosses to bundle separately, in Yiddish in the northwest, in Polish in the northeast. On the whole, Polish phonological isoglosses tend to bundle only rarely. The easternmost isoglosses do so, however, along a line that corresponds closely with the eastern border of Podlaŝe, long a Lithuanian province. Yet these isoglosses surely predate the Union of Lublin. Typical Mazovian cemeteries of the 10th to 13th centuries have been found not only in Podlaŝian border communities like Vėngreve but as far east as Bjale and Brest (Rhode 1955:70). We know that at least the western portion of the province was originally populated, and in the 14th century repopulated, by Mazovians from the west (Gloger 1900:202). In 1391, towns like Droheč'ín, Bilsk, Suraŝ and Mjelnik, though continuing to belong to the Lithuanian Grand Duchy, were under lease to Mazovia (Rhode op. cit.:311).

In any case, the Polish isoglosses suggest, as a rule, that the features they represent began to diffuse long before the political boundaries separating the Poles from the Eastern Slavs acquired any significance. Several of the isoglosses parallel the northern portion

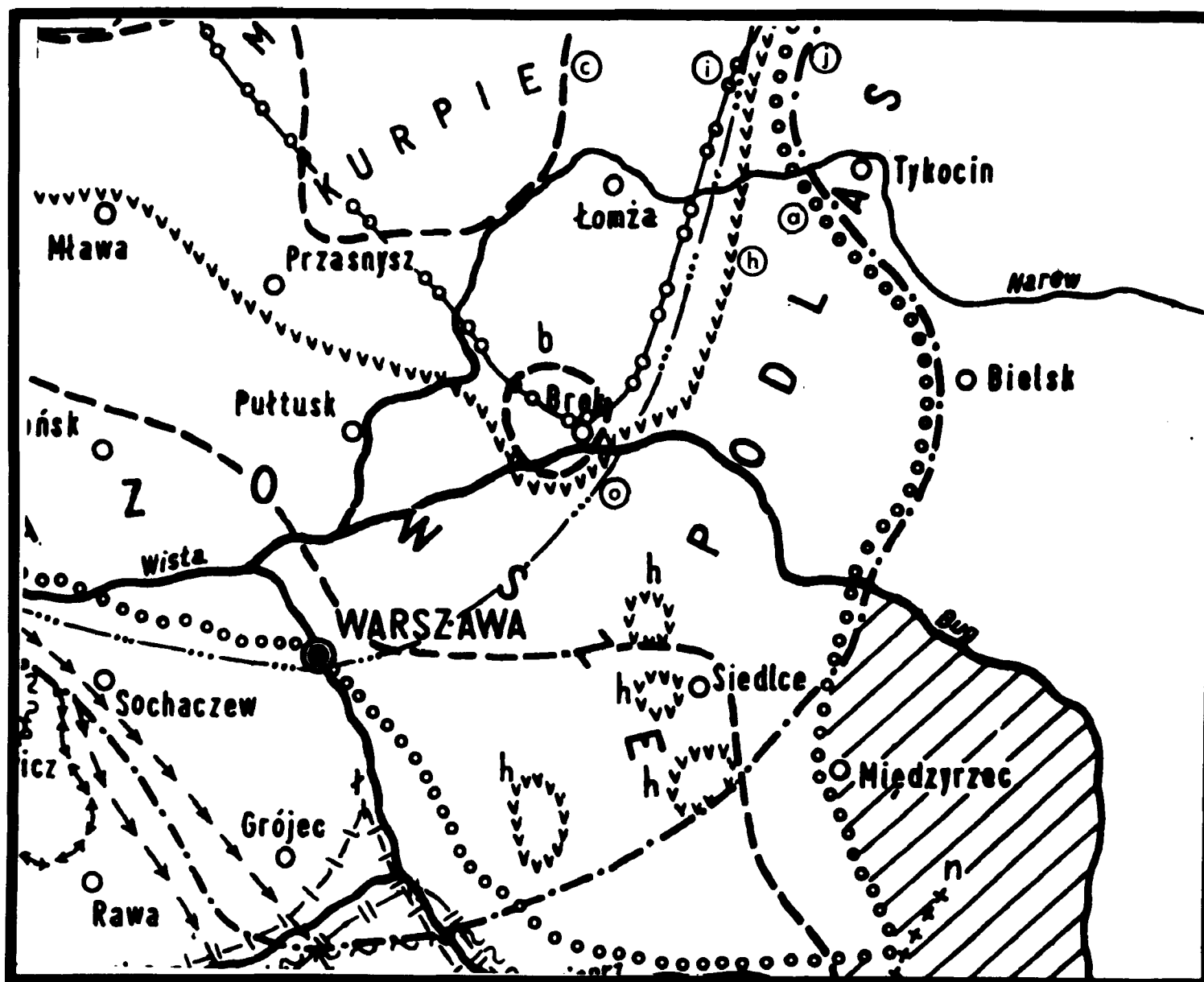


FIG. 6:12 POLISH PHONOLOGICAL ISOGLOSSES (Urbánczyk 1963, Map 1)

Key to Fig 6:12 (from Urbańczyk 1962, Map. 1)

Isoglosses:

- a - The southern and eastern boundary of y [I.P.A. ɯ] pronounced as i:  
riba.
- b - The eastern boundary of y pronounced as y<sup>i</sup> :my<sup>i</sup>šy<sup>i</sup>
- c - The southwestern and northern boundaries of the area where â is  
pronounced a.
- h - The southern boundary of the pronunciation ýara; near Siedlce there  
are islands of this pronunciation.
- i - The southwestern and northern boundaries of the nogamy type pro-  
nunciations.
- j - The southwestern boundary of the pronunciation švat.
- o - The boundary of lack of metaphony of \*ě into 'a

Place Names:\*

<u>Polish</u>	<u>Yiddish</u>	<u>Polish</u>	<u>Yiddish</u>
Bielsk	Bilsk	Pultusk	Pultúsk
Brok	Brok	Rawa	Rave
Grójec	Grice	Siedlce	Šedlec
Lomża	Lomze	Sochaczew	Sóxečev
Międzyrzec	Mezrifč	Tykocin	Tiktin
Mława	Mlave	Warszawa	Varše
Przasnysz	Prušnec		

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\*Cf. Appendix II and key to Fig. 0:1.

of the border between Mazovia and Podlaŝe. None correspond with it in the south.

To the west of our map lies another area in which the Polish linguistic boundaries show a tendency to bundle. Again it is only here that they seem to correspond to the course of a river (the Vistula). Elsewhere, on the contrary, the location of the isoglosses suggests that the rivers facilitated the diffusion of the linguistic features, or at least that they presented no obstacles to the early Slavic settlers.

The shape and location of the Polish isoglosses relative to one another leave at least the visual impression of a wave-like diffusion of linguistic features moving more or less along a north-south axis. This is in sharp contrast to the picture of Yiddish isoglosses.

The extreme bundling tendency of Yiddish isoglosses including non-verbal isopleths suggests the movement of people rather than of language features alone. The direction of movement implied is along an east-west axis. Generally speaking, rivers seem to have impaired movement or communication, rather than to have facilitated them, though it is difficult to distinguish the role of a river itself from that of a political or administrative border running along it.

The river Ómelev, a short stretch in the north near the East Prussian border and a short distance to the east of a Polish "land" boundary (~~Zaboklicka~~ 1958), seems to have been a formidable obstacle to the passage of Yiddish language features. It represents, by the way, the only border that encompasses both significant structural and diachronic differences between the dialect areas it separates. We saw

from the historical account that Jews settled relatively late in the towns on either side of it (probably later in Mišnec than in Xoržl, for which we have a founding date). This suggests that the radically different dialects which border upon the river were brought "ready-made" by those who ultimately settled the communities around it.

### 6.3 The Interstitial Area

The original meeting of NEY and SY in the area between Iso-glosses 1 and 2 gave rise to a variety of linguistic transition phenomena. Facilitated by structural pressures, simple diffusion mechanisms would then have carried one or another alternant of each varying phenomenon eastward or westward to its present location. We know for example that the merger of vowels  $*\underline{i}_{31}$  and  $*\underline{u}_{51}$ ,  $*\underline{i}_{32}$  and  $*\underline{u}_{52}$ , respectively, was oriented toward the east (cf. Fig. 5:91), while the wave of length elimination (cf. Figs. 5:97-5:98) was necessarily a westward moving phenomenon, leaving in its wake a total merger, in the transition area, of these four formerly distinct vowels. Knowing that vocalic length was formerly distinctive in all of Yiddish, we may assume that transition phenomena very similar to those created by the divergence of the length isoglosses at their present location (Fig. 5:97) were once characteristic of the Lithuanian area where the contrasts were first eliminated.

We forbear to restate our assumptions concerning the structural entailment of all the phonological changes that followed, but it bears repeating that, while contact may have occurred before the SY monophthongization of  $\underline{aj}_{34}$  (§5.12.4), it certainly occurred before the CY lowering

of ej<sub>22</sub> and the subsequent diphthongization of e<sub>25</sub> (cf. Table 10). the differential distribution of CY aj<sub>22</sub> and ej<sub>25</sub> is a result of the merger of 22 and 25 in the interstitial area and the check which this merger exerted upon the further spread of aj<sub>22</sub>.

The relative chronology of phonological change in the transition area must be reconstructed from the contrast between the present state of the language and our knowledge of its earlier stages. In much of the area structural pressures have succeeded in creating a relatively homogeneous phonological system. Not so, however, is the case of grammatical and lexical variation. Here the transition area presents a picture of heterogeneity in its present-day state. The fact that these linguistic features are relatively free of structural entailment permits us to assume that their criss-crossing isoglosses reflect a situation much like that at the time of contact. The specific lexical isoglosses may be virtually the ones that were established at the time of first contact, while the gender isoglosses are (for structural reasons cited in §§4.11.3, 4.12.1) probably replacements of others that have since moved further westward.

Another feature of the interstitial area is the fact that it incorporates many of the lexical isoglosses distinguishing Yiddish words of East Slavic origin from their West Slavic cognates. Since these Yiddish boundaries run some distance to the west of the border between East and West Slavic per se, the East Slavic forms are likely to have been imported by Jewish immigrants from the east who first moved into the area. That the Yiddish isoglosses did not subsequently recede is probably due in part to the fact that the east-west distinction

in Slavic-origin vocabulary is of no structural significance in Yiddish.<sup>9</sup>

## 6.4 Other Patterns

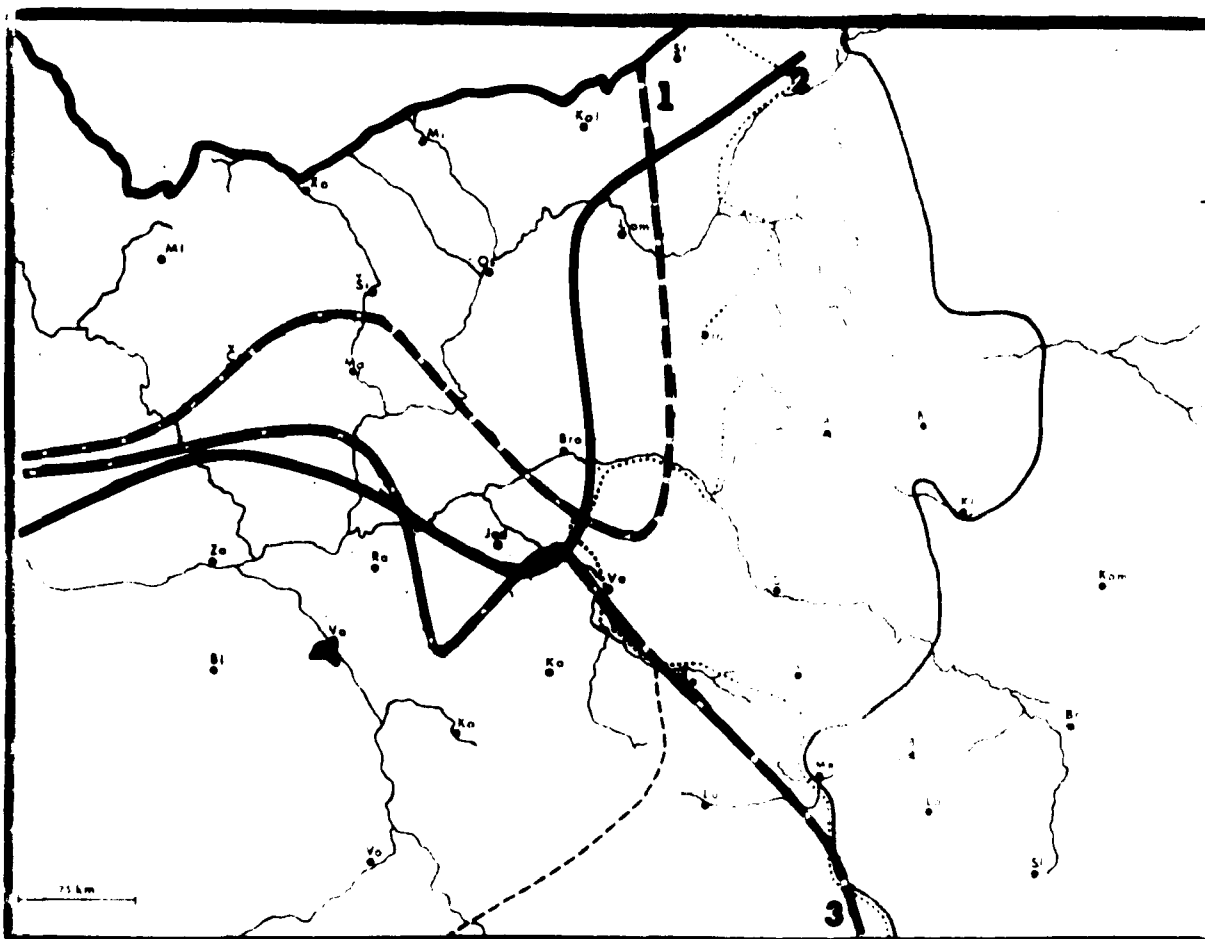
### 6.41 Small-Scale Fragmentation

In Chapter 3, we observed the isolation of various local areas by the occurrence of groups of lexical items of limited distribution (Figs. 3:35-3:38). A degree of uncertainty about the significance of these phenomena will remain until further investigation reveals the state of the language outside of our area. In preliminary fashion we may suggest, however, that the words specific to the northwestern communities (Fig. 3:36) are likely to be of the most limited distribution. Some of them may be direct borrowings from the neighboring German of East Prussia. In contrast, the northeastern specialties (Fig. 3:37) and those of the southeast (Fig. 3:35) are more apt to represent the intrusion of much larger areas stretching far to the east. The same holds true for the intrusion of lexical innovations from the south (Fig. 3:38; cf. also Figs. 4:16, 4:69).

A situation that parallels the latter phenomenon seems to occur in Polish as well. On the basis of a description of their location by Nitsch (1955: 27, 31, 40), we have plotted a number of isoglosses that represent the penetration of innovations from Poland Minor into the Mazovian area (Fig. 6:13). The lexical items in both languages are unrelated, but the thrust of innovating forces operating in a similar

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<sup>9</sup>The predominance of East Slavic incursions into the western area should not obscure the virtual universality of a number of lexical items of western origin that must be among the oldest Slavic loans in Yiddish (cf. Fig. 3:55).



After Nitsch (1955: 27, 31, 40)

1. *wywiełga* 'oriole'

2. *niedoperz* 'bat'

3. *kogut* 'rooster'

FIG. 6:13 POLISH INNOVATIONS FROM THE SOUTH



direction is evident.

#### 6.42 The Channel of Innovation

In our discussion of grammatical phenomena we called attention to a path, running between the northwest and the southeast, where innovations appear to intrude in an otherwise continuous area. The proper interpretation of this phenomenon must also wait the results of further investigation by the LCAAJ. Provisionally, however, we might venture to propose its relationship to SEY--hence also the relationship of SEY to NCY as a whole. The graphic evidence gives the impression that if our map were to be extended, many of the features that lie along this path would extend into the SEY area. In some instances we have evidence that this is in fact the case--not only for items that must be considered innovations in the light of their distribution (cf. Figs. 4:62, 4:87-4:91) but also for others which, for similar distributional reasons, must be considered survivals (cf. Fig. 3:40 and diagram in §5.13.2).

If our assumption is correct, then the diagonal path may bear some relationship to the routes followed by Jewish settlers from Poland Major (to the west of Mazovia) when they moved into the Ukraine after 1569.

6.43 Channels of Extinction. In §2.21.1 we considered the stricture against the eating of tomatoes (Fig. 2:11) as an example of survivals in the area. In light of the subject matter, however, it is evident that the same distribution may be interpreted as the result of innovation--illustrating the efficacy of what might be termed pressures of

modernization emanating from Poland Major in the west and Lithuania in the east.

As a rule we interpret the diffusion of innovations as an aggressive force acting continuously until its course is impeded by man-made or natural obstacles. This principle is widely supported in the literature and has been formulated most explicitly by Edward Sapir (1916:410f.):

Generally speaking the geographical distribution of a culture-element is continuous. It may stop abruptly at a prominent geographic barrier, . . . or send out spurs along favorable lines of communication . . . but, on the whole, the area of distribution tends to be a compact land mass . . . .

While this applies as well to ethnographic distributions that reinforce the major linguistic discontinuity (cf. Fig. 2:4), there are some patterns that compel us to reconsider the generality of Sapir's principle. Examine again the items mapped in Figs. 2:14-2:25.<sup>10</sup> We have shown that there are no reasonable grounds for considering these discontinuous phenomena as polygenetic innovations, and that instead we must treat them as survivals (cf. Ch. 2, fn. 10) but the geography of these survivals bears a striking resemblance to the geography of the innovations shown in Fig. 2:11 (cf. also Figs. 3:51, 3:69, 4:64). Apparently, then, the survival patterns result from the same multi-directional pressures that produced the patterns of Fig. 2:11. Whereas in Fig. 2:11, however, the residual area is one of survival, in Fig. 6:14-6:15 the residual area, beyond the reach of "survival pressures", takes the form of a channel of extinction in which a significant number

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<sup>10</sup>In order to simplify comparison we repeat two of these illustrations in Figs. 6:14-6:15.

of long established practices that were still observed in the areas to the north(west) and south(east) of it have been eliminated.

We recall that the channels of extinction were not restricted to non-verbal culture. When the distribution of lexical items is considered in terms of the co-occurrence or absence of an older form, remarkably similar results emerge. It is of no consequence that the distributions of any two items fail to correspond precisely. On the other hand, we have previously indicated that the importance of similar distributional tendencies is increasingly emphasized by the lack of any functional relationship among the items in question.

In Fig. 6:16-6:17 we have illustrated the area where lexical forms, elsewhere preserved and often co-existent with synonyms, have been completely eliminated (cf. Figs. 3:32-3:34). The similarity of these patterns to those of Figs. 6:14-6:15) leads us to the conclusion that the diminution of both the lexical and cultural inventories of a society must ultimately be the result of similar causes. Given the dynamics of the process illustrated here, it seems reasonable to assume that in both cases we are confronted with an aggressive force moving along the same channels of communication. Are we justified, however, in thinking of a process of extinction as an aggressive force?<sup>11</sup>

Just as we are wont to think of innovation rather than extinction as the aggressive force in language and culture, so do we tend to consider

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<sup>11</sup>It is possible that what appears on our maps as an extinction was in reality a replacement of one pattern by another. However, field work for the ICAAJ has shown that usually an informant asked about a non-existent practice (e.g. eating latkes for Hanukkah in Rumania) will volunteer information about the prevalent equivalent (e.g. "No, no latkes, but varénikes"). In the examples cited here, no information as to "replacement" customs or lexical items was volunteered.

the former as the systematic force as well. Innovation like extinction may be random, but one seldom encounters a reference to patterns of systematic extinction. As a rule, geographic discontinuity between two territories preserving identical culture elements, is attributed to the movement of populations from a culture center to an outlying area. Thus if we were to consider the entire Ashkenazic area rather than a portion of it in isolation, and discover that a number of culture traits prevailed only in Northern Poland and a part of the Ukraine, we might reasonably attribute the discontinuity to southeastward migration from Poland. The geographical gap would still be conventionally interpreted as the consequence of innovating forces in the Ukraine, and extinction need not enter into our reckoning. If, however, our object is a relatively small area which repeatedly displays a pattern of (particularly ethnographic) discontinuity, a discontinuity that bears no apparent relationship to the usual transition phenomena that are the consequence of dialect contact, we must consider the possibility that we are indeed faced with a systematic and aggressive force of extinction.

To what events in the history of the area can the phenomena described in our discussion be reasonably related? We have already shown that when the history of Jewish settlement in Mazovia and Podlaŝe is taken into account, the major linguistic isogloss bundles assume an almost obvious relationship to concrete historical events. Isoglosses 1 and 3 may be dated with high probability in the 15th century, while Isogloss 2, in part potentially datable to the 16th century, was probably not fully established for at least 200 years thereafter. We can hardly venture to date the channels of extinction, for the elimination

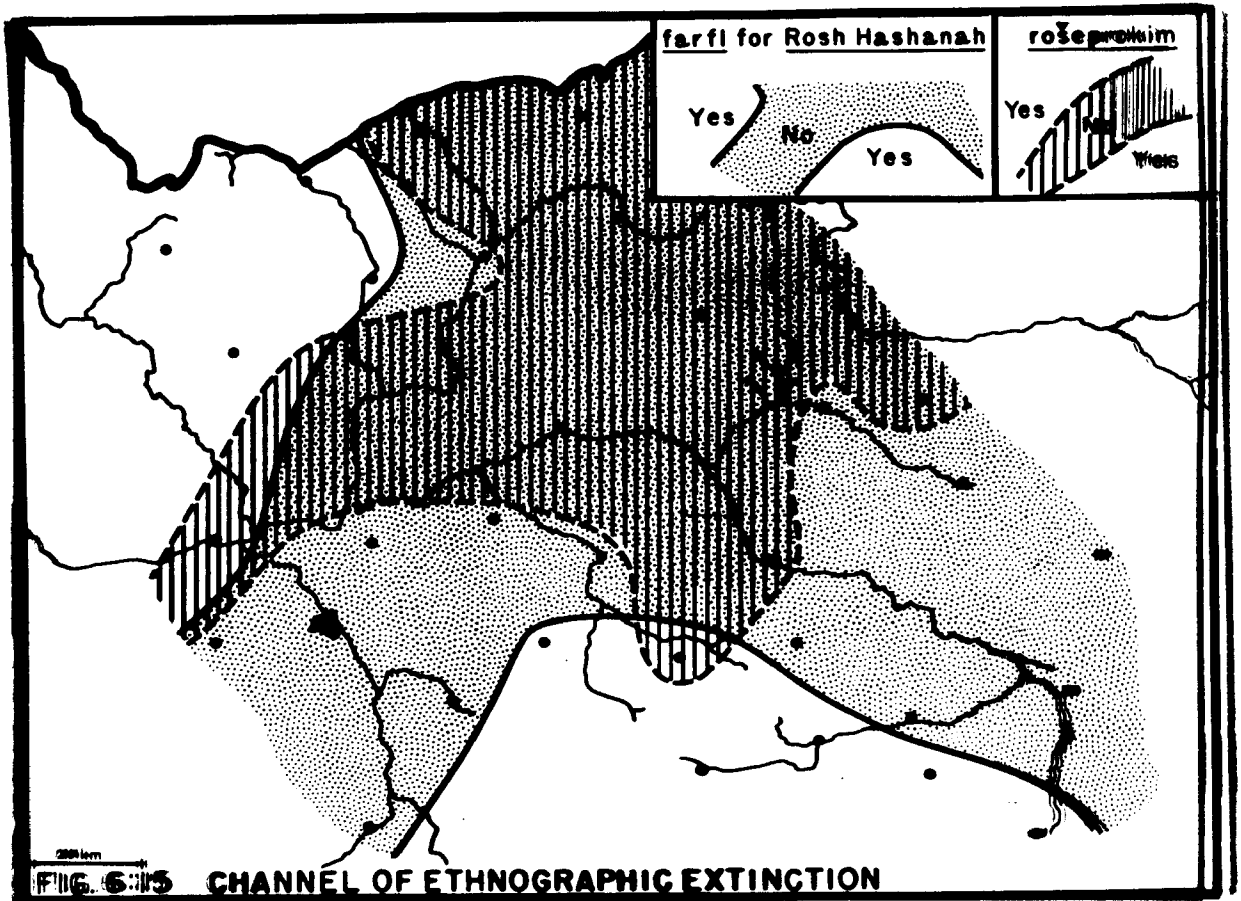
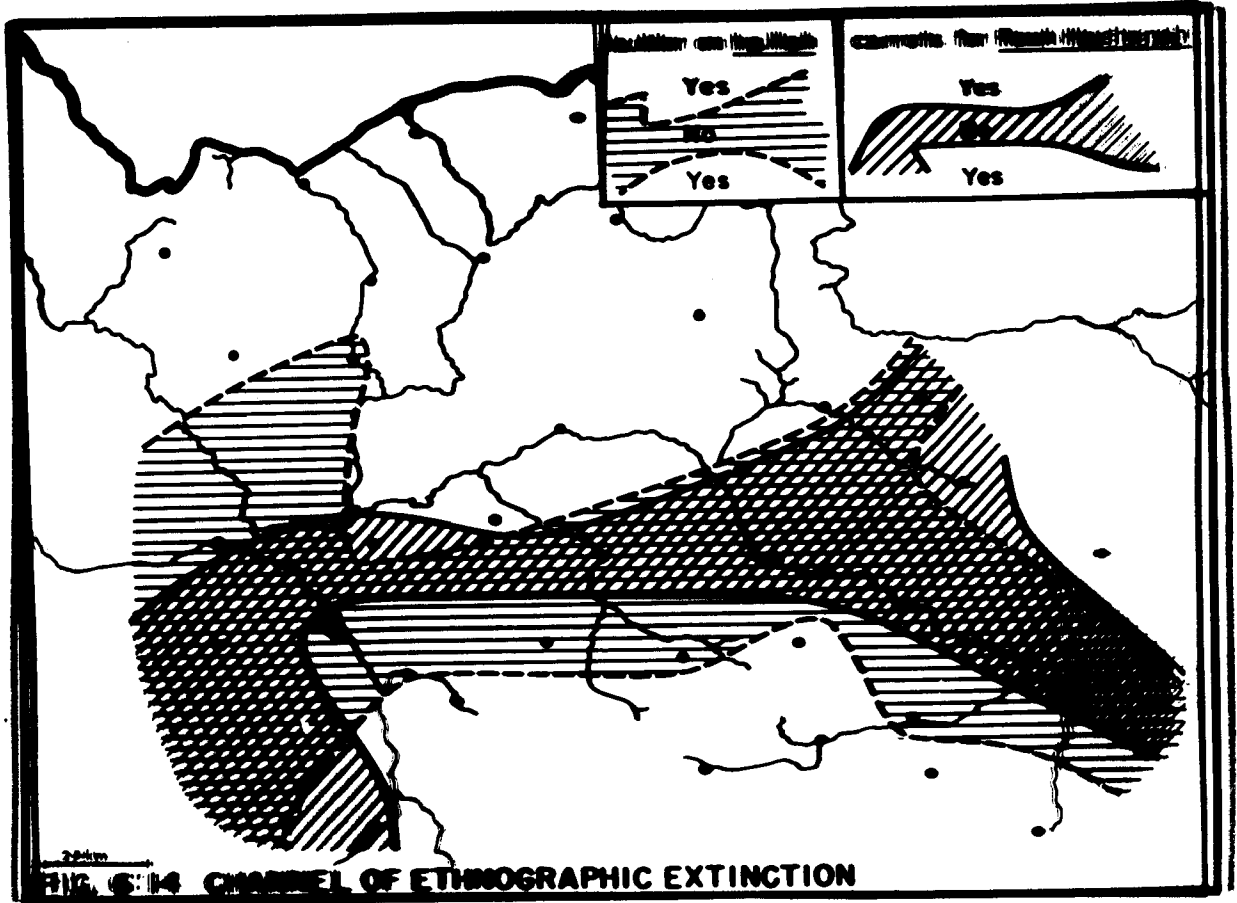
of a feature, like the introduction of a new one, can only be considered a progressive phenomenon (but cf. Chap. 2, fn. 6). We may assume, for example, that were we able to conduct a similar survey of our communities at an earlier or a later date, our data would reflect different stages in the progress of the process of elimination. In fact at any point in time it is probably feasible to select and order a series of different items whose distribution would be suggestive of the process in different stages of completion.

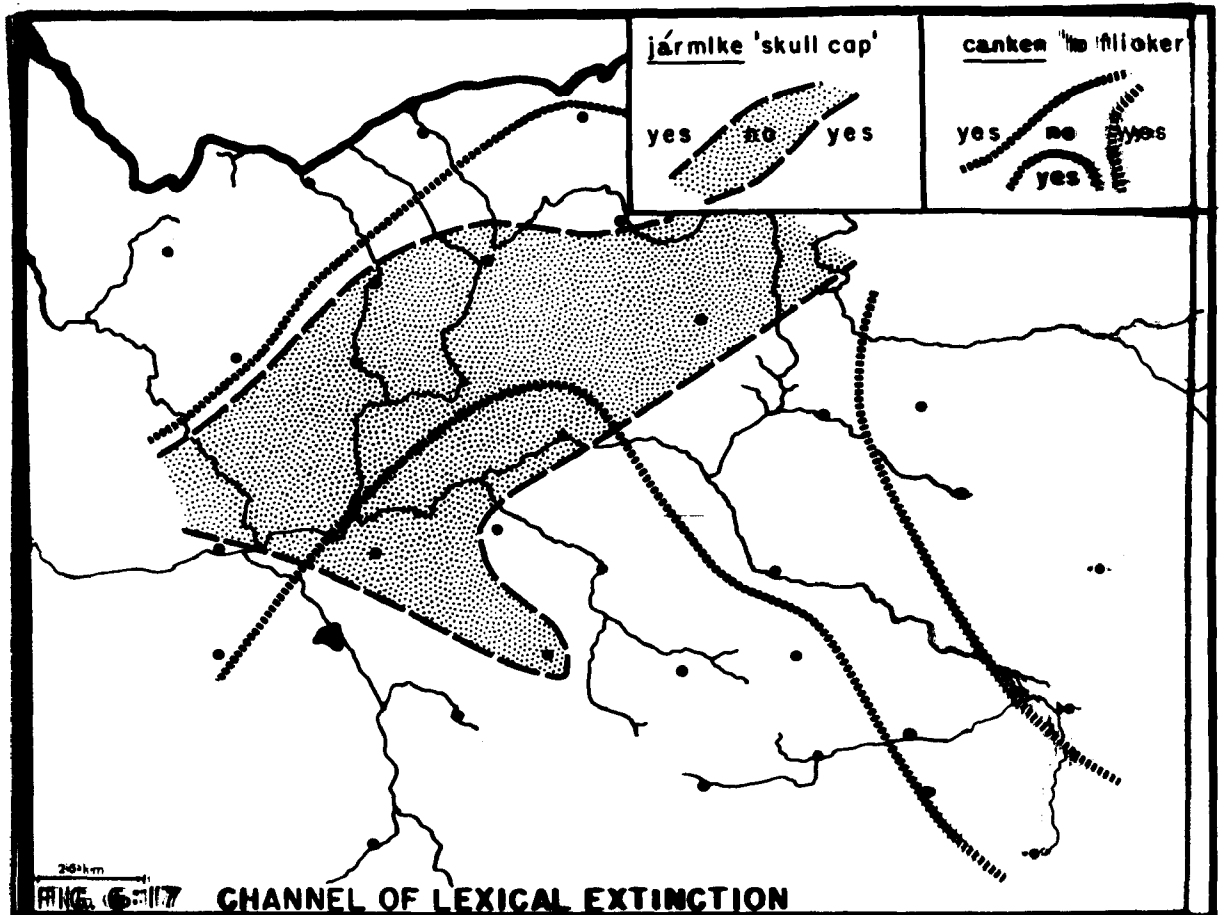
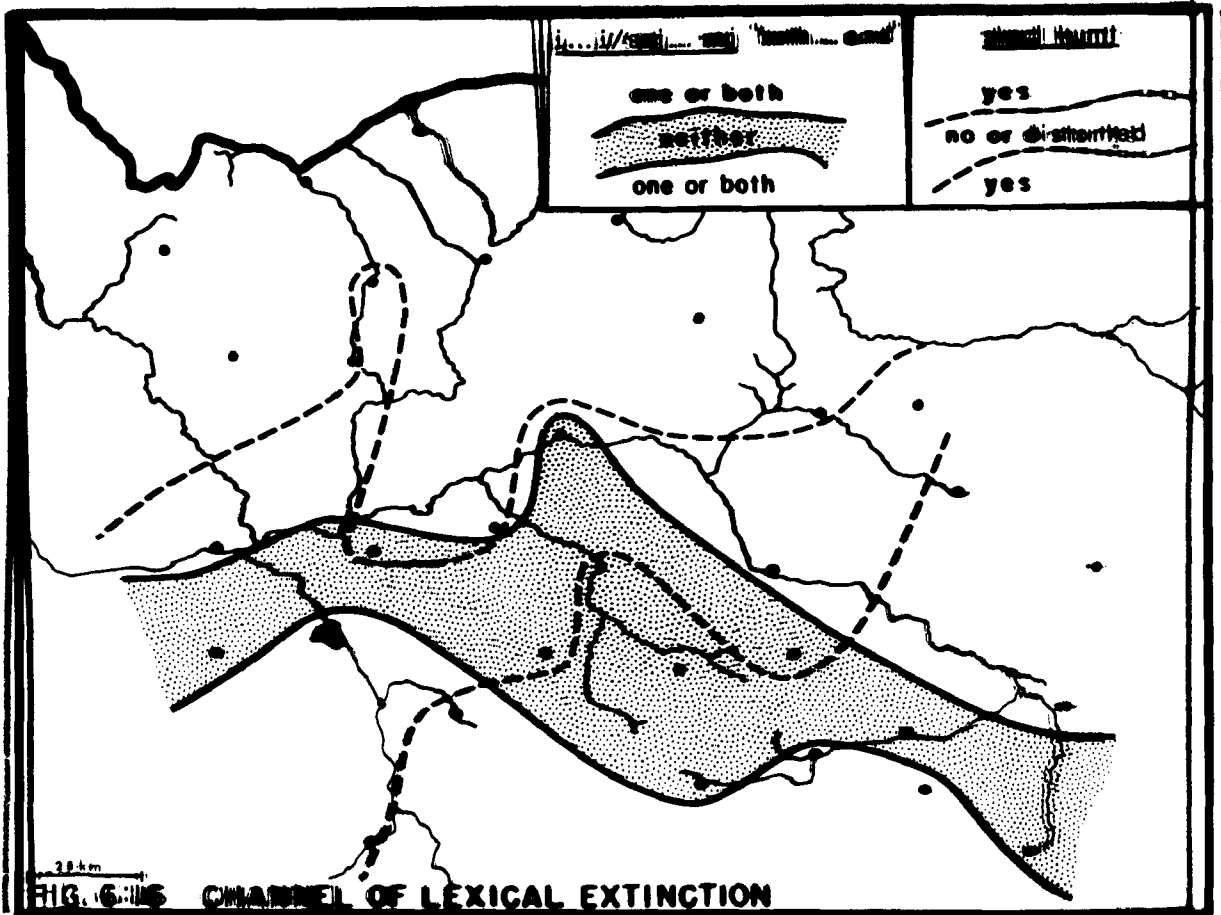
But while attempting to date the phenomenon might prove to be an unrewarding task, we have nevertheless found it possible to suggest external correlates to which it seems to bear a much greater than chance resemblance. In Fig. 6:18 we have drawn a composite of the major trade routes that were developed in northern Poland during the 15th and 16th centuries. The similarity of their course to the channels illustrated in Figs. 6:14-6:17 cannot easily be ignored<sup>12</sup> (cf. also Figs. 2:14-2:25, 3:32-3:34).

We can imagine that as the restrictions upon Jewish settlement in Mazovia were progressively eased between the 15th and the 18th centuries, the existing trade routes facilitated the movement of settlers into the area. They must certainly have facilitated contacts among communities that lay in their course. In an overall sense, were these not the most mobile settlements and those most exposed to outside contacts? Contact

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<sup>12</sup>The particularly good "fit" of Figs. 6:14, 6:16 to Fig. 6:18 is highlighted by the manner in which the lines curve to the northeast in the Bilsk area. Nevertheless, we again draw attention to the fact that identity between any two maps is beyond reasonable expectation.





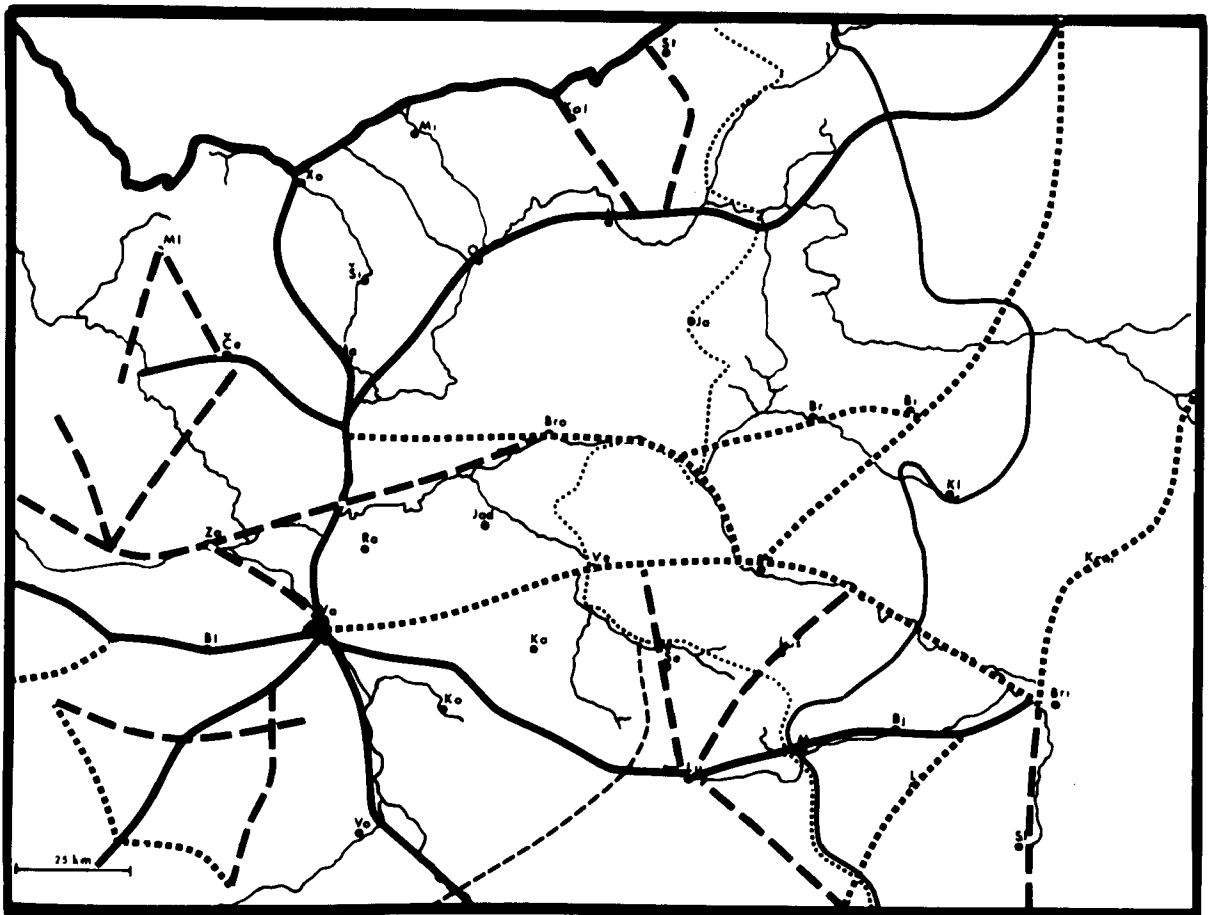
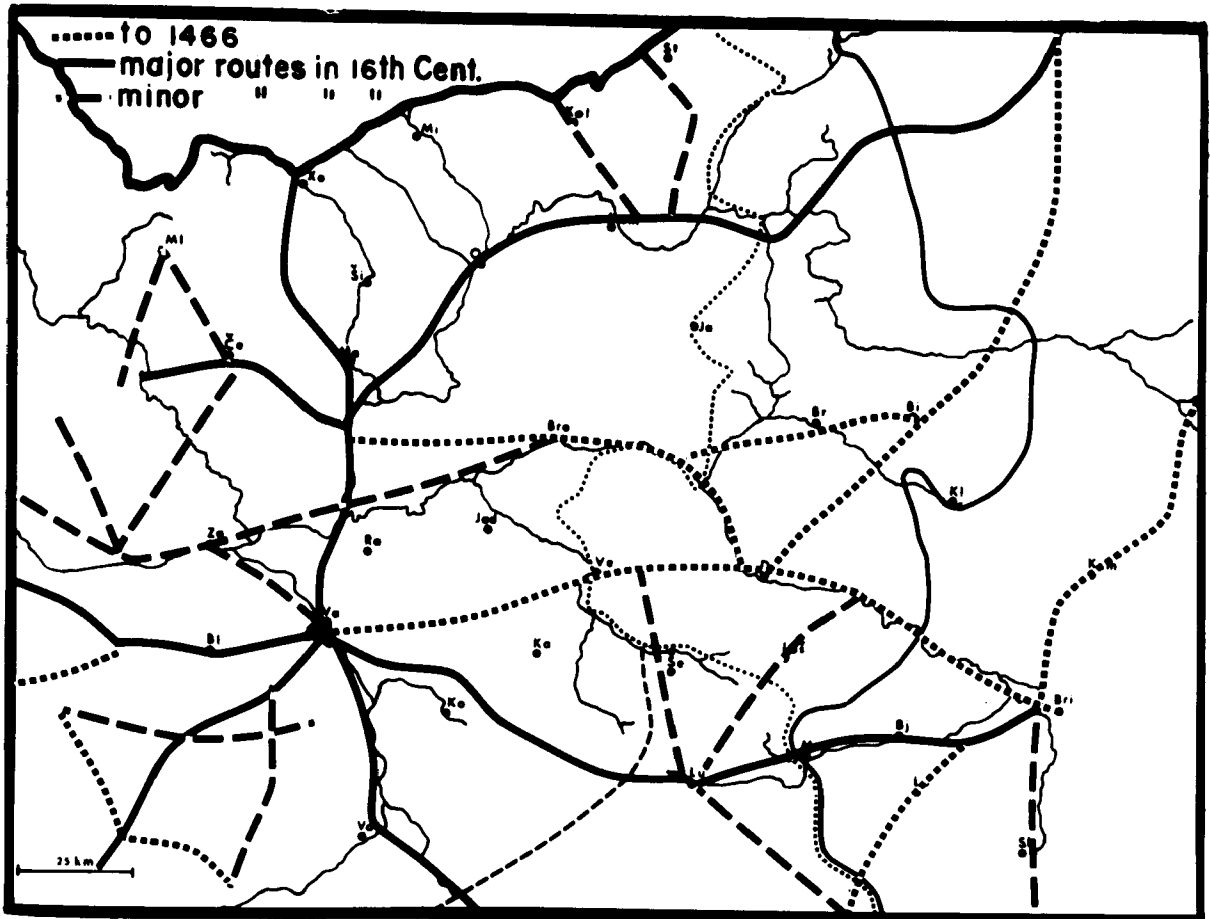


FIG. 6:18 TRADE ROUTES IN NORTHERN POLAND



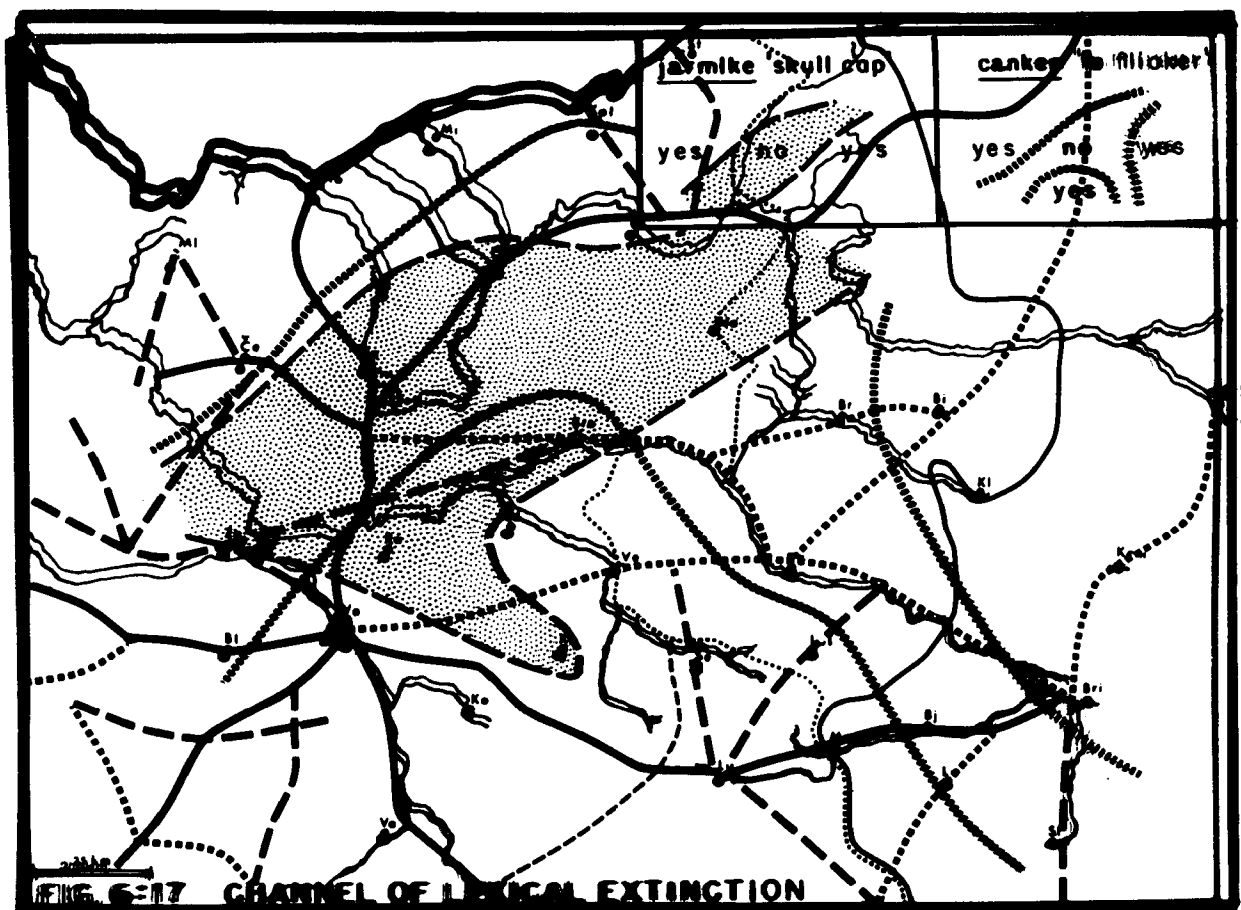
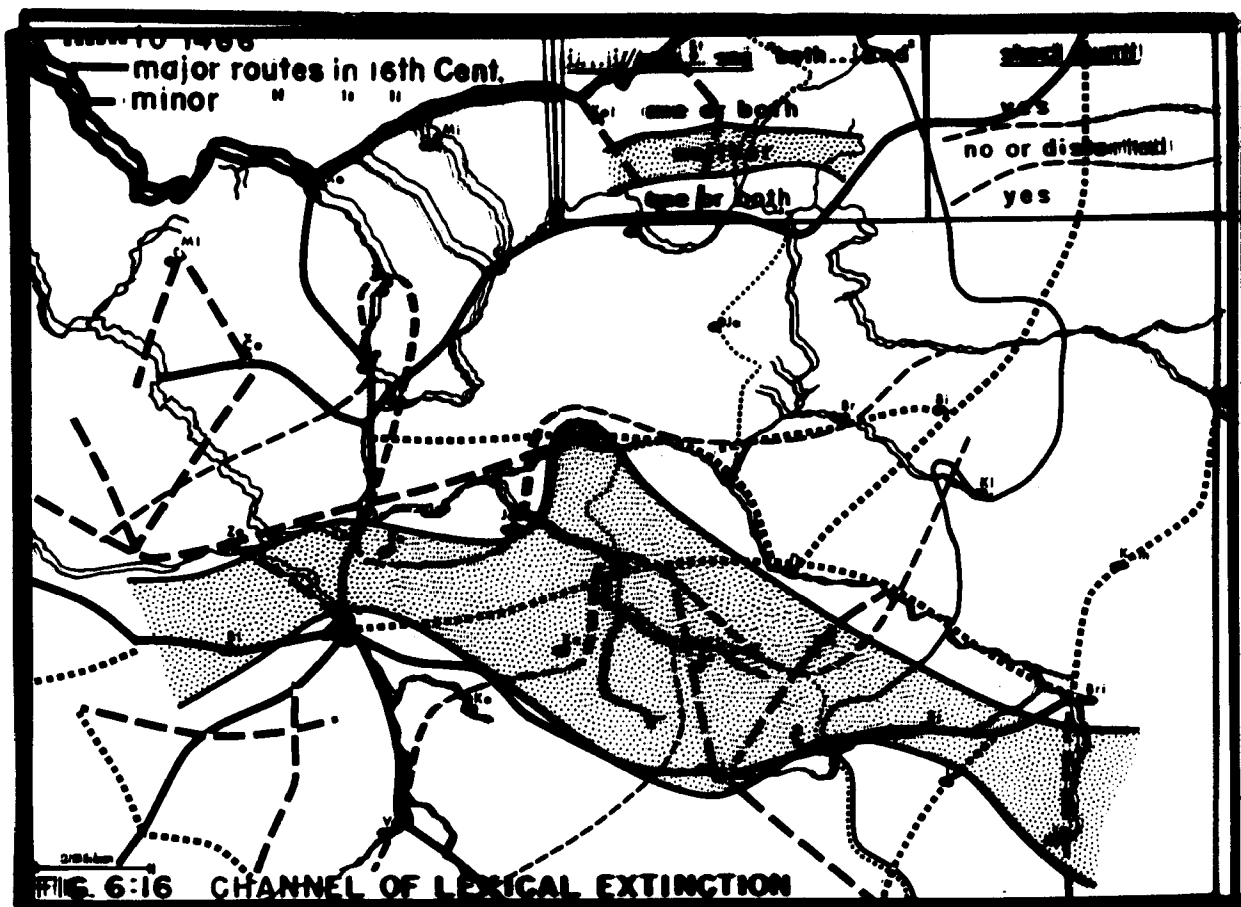
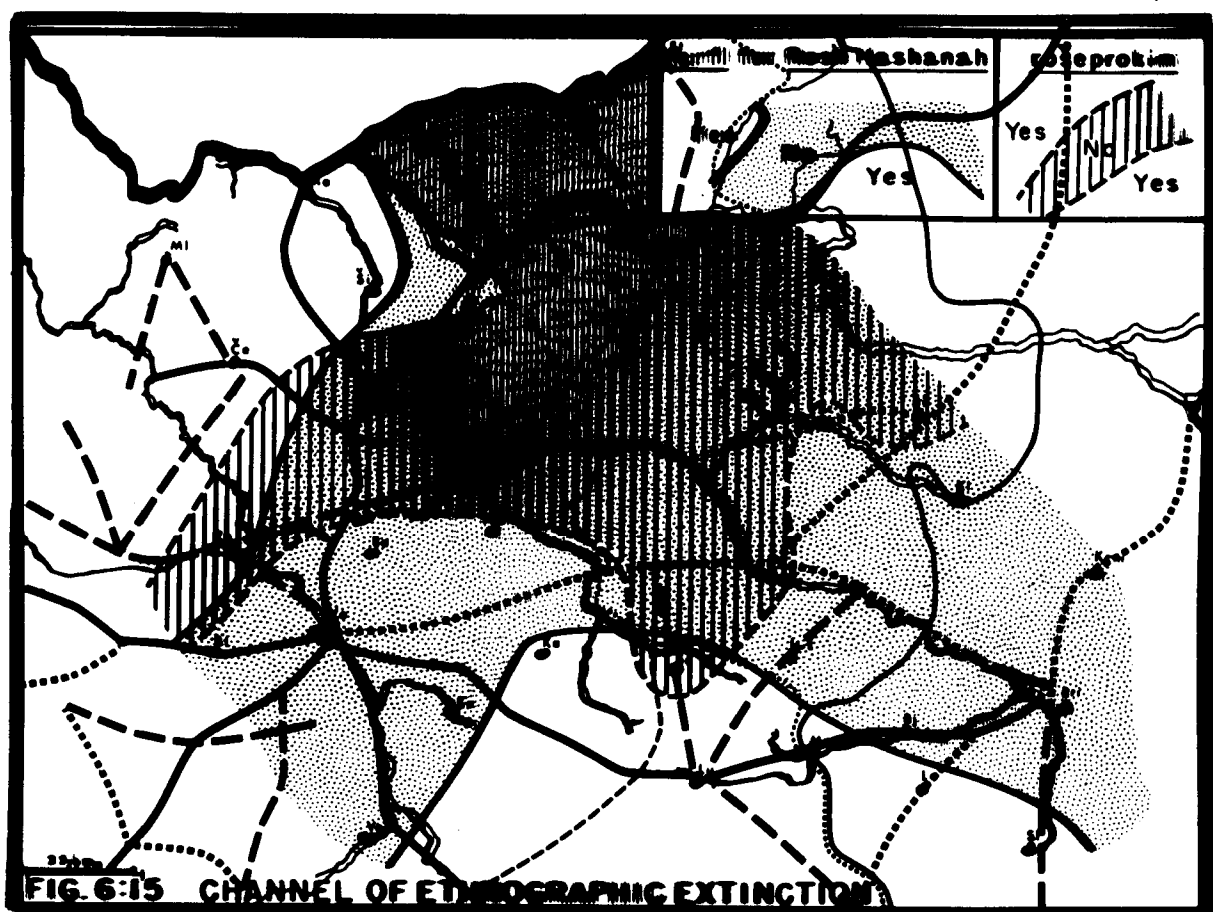
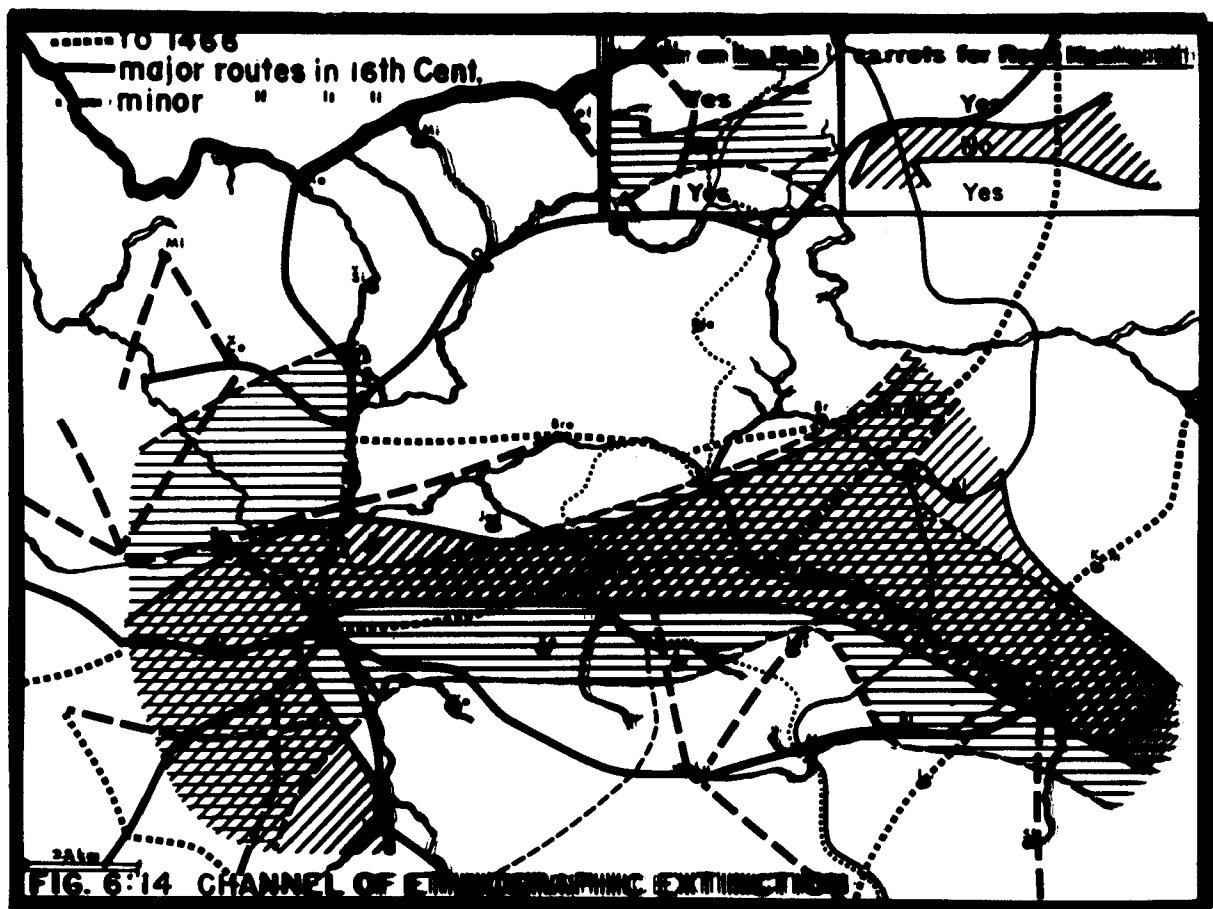


FIG. 6:18 TRADE ROUTES IN NORTHERN POLAND



**FIG. 6:18 TRADE ROUTES IN NORTHERN POLAND**

is in essence communication and communication in turn is a source of both linguistic and cultural change.<sup>13</sup> In general we would be reluctant to contend that the source of all innovation in Yiddish must lie along the trade routes, yet for the specific lexical innovations whose older synonyms have been eliminated, this seems a plausible hypothesis.

The absence of correspondence between phonological isoglosses and the pattern of lexical extinction may be easily explained. If in addition to reinforcing the phonological borders, the lexicon displays patterns unique to itself and suggestive of a more rapid rate of change, it is probably a result of the fact that lexical change is less far-reaching in its structural effects than phonological change. The persistence of a superseded lexical form, often uniquely embedded in disguised fashion somewhere in the system, may be greater than that of a phoneme that has been replaced, but there is no doubt that the lexicon is the more vulnerable aspect of language, more readily subject to the pressures that new contacts bring to bear upon its carriers.

The same considerations are perhaps more applicable to non-linguistic culture elements. We may even venture to assume that new settlers, moving along the trade routes, virtually pioneers on a new frontier, are wont to lighten the cultural baggage which they carry with them. In relation to the system of the culture as a whole, the items in question were no more crucial than the lexical items that were lost. Specific uncodified practices associated with a festival could easily be

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<sup>13</sup>Under these circumstances it would be wise to bear in mind the dangers of applying Sapir's age-area concept too rigidly. Keesing (1958: 117) cautions that the assumption of a uniform, mechanical rate of diffusion has no reality in culture change: "The age-area concept appears on the whole to be most valid where communication goes at foot pace and by word of mouth." It is less valid "where channels of communication are open and innovations have general appeal . . .".

abandoned without affecting the institution of the festival itself. The latter is in a sense the repository of a cultural value, while the former is simply one of its many possible and replaceable expressions.

Even if the settlement process itself did not occasion the loss of cultural practices it is nevertheless apparent that the conditions favorable to change that characterize the trade routes could accomplish, after the lapse of some time, what the displacement of populations alone could not. Whether we think in terms of a force of innovation in the lexicon and of modernization (or "urbanization") in the realm of customary beliefs and practices, or instead, of a systematic force of extinction, it is clear that its effectiveness on the less highly structured levels of language and culture was facilitated by the highways that carried people and products from one community to the next, and that from the point of view of a traditional society it left in its wake a path of linguistic and cultural impoverishment.

## CHAPTER 7

### SOME GENERAL IMPLICATIONS

#### 7.1 Etymology and Geography

Our stated aim has been to interpret each isogloss as an independent reflection of impaired communication (whether as a boundary of migration or of stimulus diffusion). On the whole, we therefore ruled out the possibility that the etymological source of a word precluded it from appearing in any part of our area. In the light of certain theories concerning the specialized semantic or stylistic functions of Yiddish words depending on their origin (cf. Borochoy 1913:10), their "right" to random geographic variation has not always been obvious.

#### 7.11 Existence of Variation in the HA Component

The prevailing view in Yiddish linguistics has long been that every Hebrew word is potentially a Yiddish word since "to some extent the entire HA repertoire has, so to speak, been swallowed up in the broad sea of Yiddish" (Y. Mark 1951:465). Geographic studies of the past few years have already shown that this is incorrect. Recently, U. Weinreich (1962c) demonstrated an unpredictable diversity in the occurrence, phonology, grammatical form, meaning, and stylistic function of HA words. The present study further confirms the fact that the geographic variability of HA words, conforming as it does to common distributional patterns (cf. Figs. 3:2, 3:10-3:11, 3:15, 3:25), is independent of the origin of the words. Whatever the scope of an individual's learning, the HA component

of his Yiddish is strongly determined by regional factors. Market women in one area make free use of words and phrases that a scholar elsewhere might cite and understand, but which he would no sooner consider Yiddish than he would accept other 'foreign' words (see, for example, tomid 'always' Fig. 3:38). The folk conception of what, in different regions, constitutes Yiddish, Hebrew, German, and Slavic, would in itself make an interesting study.

## 7.12 Sources of Geographic Variation in the Germanic Component

7.12.1 Proto-Yiddish Doublets. Wherever a single proto-form could not be reconstructed without postulating an ad hoc sound law, we assumed the existence of a doublet in the proto-language. Some such doublets are attested in MHG, e.g. kamen/kemen 'to comb' (Fig. 3:37), while others are not, e.g. cvancik/cvoncik 'twenty' (Fig. 3:38) or klaibn/kloibn 'to gather' (Fig. 5:77). Nor have we any more reason to expect that all Yiddish doublets should have MHG counterparts than that all MHG doublets be reflected in Yiddish (e.g. guomen/goumen 'palate', Yiddish gumen, cf. M. Weinreich 1954a:73). Alfred Landau (1892:288) was the first to caution against the assumption that Yiddish words must of necessity be derived from attested MHG forms.<sup>1</sup>

7.12.2 Different German Dialects. Of the numerous lexical differences among German dialects--even within upper German--only a very limited

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<sup>1</sup>In the same vein Landau further stated (1902:297f.): "Der jüdische Laut muss ja nicht in seiner heutigen Gestalt direkt dem deutschen entlehnt sein, sondern kann das Endglied einer Entwicklungsreihe sein, die erst nach der Auswanderung aus Deutschland begonnen hat."

number are reflected in Yiddish; e.g. enk/ajx 'you (obl. pl.)' (Fig. 3:14), kolern/kulern 'to roll (a ball)' (Fig. 3:29), but not, for example, Imme/Biene 'bee' (Yiddish only bin), or Ross/Gaul/Pferd (EY only ferd).

But can we assume some regular correlation for dialect differences shared by Yiddish and German? Landau (1892) suggested that we could not, and M. Weinreich showed (1932:176f.) that no Yiddish dialect is identical with any German dialect. He concluded, furthermore (1938:289), that "in the course of being transported to Eastern Europe, it was not elements of German dialects that were mixed together, but rather elements of Yiddish dialects". These conclusions were decisively confirmed by Žirmunski (1940: 243ff.) who inferred from the data published by Vilenkin (1931) that processes independent with respect to German had led to the dialectal differentiation of (Eastern) Yiddish on Slavic territory.

These conclusions are based on the fact that every Yiddish dialect combines a considerable number of Germanic features that are nowhere found together in a single German dialect. In our own area this is demonstrated, for example, by the lack of correspondence in the distribution of the plural imperative suffixes -c/-t (the former of Bavarian origin) and the forms of the plural pronoun ec (also of Bavarian origin) and ajx 'you' (cf. Fig. 4:80). Yiddish in all of East Galicia and Rumania shows the same discrepancy. Other words of German dialectal origin, e.g. preglen 'to fry, render' (cf. Birnbaum 1954:66), seem to show no isogloss. Hence, instead of relying on its geography in German, we are justified in considering each item as independent evidence for Yiddish.

7.12.3 "Standard" German Influences on Yiddish. Even after its territorial separation from German Eastern Yiddish was probably never free from

the influence of Standard German. This influence was strongest in the 19th century when "the pioneers of the Jewish Enlightenment in the East of Europe looked upon the German Jewish Enlightenment as their spiritual home" (Birnbaum 1954:67) and were in constant contact with German literary sources. Has this influence been geographically differentiated?

Apparently it is felt most strongly in parts of Austrian-occupied Poland (Galicia) and in Russian-governed areas with a German-speaking upper class (Courland). In literary Yiddish, according to Birnbaum (ibid.) the process of Germanization went furthest in Vilna. These, however, are not the areas with which we are concerned.

Did proximity to the German border have any effect on Yiddish in Northern Poland? In a few instances this seems to be the case (Cf. Fig. 3:36). In most, however, no differential is apparent; thus bilik 'cheap' as a partial replacement of volvl, and dajč 'German', alongside of tajč (the latter surviving only in the sense of 'meaning, translation') show no geographic patterning. Perhaps a conclusive answer must be postponed until information is available from all of Poland.

7.13 The Slavic Component. We need hardly repeat the evidence of §3.3 or Chapter 6. Coteritoriality with Slavic has left its mark upon the differentiation of Yiddish dialects. A degree of parallelism characterizes the process of regionalization in both, and the distribution of Slavic-origin vocabulary in Yiddish has obviously been constrained by the local Slavic language. It is clear, nevertheless, that Yiddish has often overcome these constraints: the border between Yiddish words of Polish-East Slavic origin lies considerably west of the East-West Slavic border itself and, in specific instances, even this expected border is



transcended. No less significant for the independent dynamic of Yiddish is the arbitrariness of Slavic borrowing vs. the retention of Germanic forms. This was illustrated by the geographic specialization of -spil'en/ -kneplen 'to button' (Fig. 3:25) in an area where špil'ke 'a pin' and knepl 'a button' are universal.

7.14 Conclusions: The Fusion Nature of Yiddish Vocabulary From the evidence, we are compelled to conclude that dialect variation in Yiddish is not governed by etymological criteria. The fact of variation, the location of its border, and the probable cause of both, are all that need concern us. We can safely assert that whatever the fashion in which a word entered the language, it did so at a particular time and in a particular place, and may subsequently have been subjected to a process of regionalization. To the latter, matters of etymology and "learnedness" appear to be entirely irrelevant. These findings point up the fallacious nature of the view that in Yiddish separate origins had determined the subsequent history of each of its etymological components.

## 7.2 Non-Verbal Culture

The considerable degree of ethnographic variation revealed in Chapter 2 brings to light the weakness of otherwise valuable works about shtetl life (e.g. Zborowski and Herzog 1952) and Jewish customs and traditions (Schauss 1938, 1950; Gaster 1955). The widespread picture of homogeneity in Ashkenazic Jewish life will not be upheld by any investigation. An illusory impression of homogeneity has been strengthened by the knowledge that, throughout centuries of migration, the Jews have preserved a common core of religious literature and prescribed beliefs and practices. Diversity among 'global' units is clearly recognized;

Ashkenazim differ from Sefardim, Jews of the Polish ghetto differ from North African Jews (Gaster ibid.: 1xf.); but differences within these groups, no less impressive and, historically, quite as significant, are usually ignored.<sup>2</sup>

The methodological fallacy which characterizes most of these compilations is their neglect of negative instances. Literary sources abound with geographically and temporally heterogeneous data; rarely is there any concern for the absence of a known trait at any particular locale. Yet it was precisely the negative evidence that permitted us to draw significant parallels between verbal and non-verbal data (36.23.3). There is of course no lack of parallelism when positive phenomena are considered, and we may conclude that we were justified in anticipating a high degree of coincidence between linguistic isoglosses and cultural isopleths.

In addition to the major discontinuity at Isogloss 1, reinforced by phenomena on all linguistic levels as well as by general non-verbal variation (Fig. 2:4), one of the most interesting correspondences between the two domains was revealed by Figs. 2:34 ("Towns Recalled") and 3:85 ("Major Lexical Isoglosses"). In evaluating the significance of this congruence we cannot ignore the fact that, among all the levels

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<sup>2</sup> Somewhat exceptional in this respect, Jacob Katz (1961:6) writes (of Jewish educational and religious institutions in the Middle Ages): ". . . even these institutions differed in many respects from country to country. We can note these differences even more clearly in economic, political-communal, family and social institutions. Indeed the latter vary . . . to an extent that makes them incompatible for common treatment. The social structure can only really be fathomed by treating Jewish history according to geographic regions or 'centers' . . . . Where several regions share a similar normative pattern, this may be accepted as evidence of actual contact between them."

of a language, the lexical is the one most easily related to the non-linguistic culture of its speakers.<sup>3</sup>

### 7.3 Structural Dialectology

#### 7.31 Structuralism vs. Dialectology

It is important to dispel the attitude that only the application of structural principles to dialect materials can justify the linguists interest in language geography. Such an attitude grows, not unnaturally, from the position taken by many modern structuralists, that the history of a language is of interest only insofar as the mechanisms of linguistic change can be shown to be contained within the language itself. Other considerations have, on the whole, been excluded from the mainstream of American structuralism. Sound change, described in other than phonemic terms; lexical innovation not easily susceptible to structural description; and semasiological variation, bordering on the elusive realm of semantics, are all relegated to the scrap heap of "continuous" phenomena presumed to be beyond the reach of the linguistic discipline. The view is best expressed by Joos (1950:350): "[Linguistics] does not . . . make any compromise with continuity. . . . All continuity, all possibility of infinitesimal gradation, are shoved outside of linguistics."

U. Weinreich's well known formulation of the principles of a structural dialectology (1954) may not have been intended to resolve this

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<sup>3</sup>"It is the vocabulary of a language that most clearly reflects the physical and social environment of its speakers" (Sapir 1912:90); and further: "if the characteristic physical environment of a people is to a large extent reflected in its language, this is true to an even greater extent of its social environment" (ibid.:94).

problem; for no compromise can change the nature of the phenomena with which the dialect geographer is confronted. So long as the principle expounded by Joos remains basic to linguistics it can hardly be expected that "structuralists [will find] a reasoned place for [dialectology] in their theory of language" (U. Weinreich ibid.:388). The essence of the problem has been stated succinctly by Bolinger (1961:10):

From the standpoint of what has become traditional in American linguistics, the question is not whether there are such things as continuous phenomena in parts of human behavior that lie close to linguistics . . . but whether such phenomena should be regarded as the object of linguistic study.

While we submit that this is the problem of the structuralist and not of the dialectologist, there are few dialectologists trained in the modern tradition for whom it does not constitute an internal conflict. Whether or not we realize the "hoped-for possibility that what looked to be continuous from a distance is actually discontinuous" (Bolinger ibid.), the dialect geographer retains his interest in both verbal and non-verbal phenomena which, though lying beyond the heuristic devices available to structuralism, nevertheless reveal the processes of language development and their relevance to non-linguistic history.

Weinreich (1954:388) attempts a reconciliation of "two very much disunited varieties of linguistics, structural and dialectological". He does not propose, however, that structuralism replace dialect geography. While structural dialectology enables the structural linguist to use dialect materials to the best linguistic advantage--witness Moulton's achievements along these lines (1960, 1961, 1962)--it enables the dialectologist to gather his materials so that they are more readily subject to such use by himself as well as by others. It remains, then, for the

dialectologist to demonstrate that even those of his data which are apparently inapplicable to structuralist ends, are also useful for illuminating aspects of language without which no unified theory of language can be complete.

In the present study we have been limited by two factors in seeking out the structural implications from our data. The first limiting factor is the extent to which each level of the language permits structural analysis by means of the available analytical devices. It is therefore not surprising that we have found the greatest number of examples of intra-structural relations in the phonology, fewer in the grammar, and fewest of all in the lexicon. We recapitulate the relevant phonological and grammatical findings in §7.32. The second limiting factor was our own evaluation of the degree to which our ends would be served by substituting purely structural techniques for those that we have employed. This has had repercussions on the treatment of both the lexical and the phonological data. The implications of doing otherwise will be considered in §7.33.

### 7.32 The Role of Structure in Determining Change

7.32.1 Phonology. Laws of implication permit us to establish a reasonably accurate chronology of phonological change, a relative chronology based on the premise that, given two changes,  $a > b$  and  $c > a$ , if  $b (< a) \neq a (< c)$  then  $a > b$  could only have occurred prior to  $c > a$ . The proportion of such changes to the total number of changes in the phonological system may constitute a measure of the role which the structure itself has played in determining them. In

Table 13 we have charted the derivation of CY < PSY < P(N)EY (cf. Tables 7 and 8).

TABLE 13  
DERIVATION OF CY < PSY < P(N)EY

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
$\phi y_{42} > oj$ (§5.12.22)	$\check{u}_{51\ 52} > \check{y}$ (§5.12.1)				
		$\check{y}_{51\ 52} > \check{i}$ (§5.12.21)			$aj_{34} > \bar{a}$ (§5.12.4)
	$\bar{o}_{12} > \bar{u}$ (§5.12.3)				$ej_{22} > aj$ (§5.13.1)
			$\bar{u}_{12} > \check{u}$ (§5.13.3)		$\bar{e}_{25} > ej$ (§5.13.2)
	$au_{54} > ou$ (§5.13.4)				
				$ou_{54} > \bar{o}$ (§5.13.4)	

Table 13 should be read as follows: Within each column, the changes must have occurred in the stated order. The horizontal lines define the time limits relative to other changes during which the separated shifts must have occurred. These terminal points are determined by preceding changes either in the same column or in another column, e.g.  $\bar{u}_{12}$  could only have split (col. 4) after  $\bar{o}_{12}$  had been raised

(col. 2). Changes separated only by broken lines were free to have occurred at any time relative to one another; e.g. the half unrounding of  $\phi y_{42}$  (col. 1) was entirely unrestricted by any other change.

While no change was a necessary consequence of changes that preceded it, every change whose time limits are defined by a preceding one constitutes presumptive evidence of the efficacy of structural pressures. In essence it reflects a readjustment of the phonological system either to fill a "hole in the pattern" or to eliminate an unsupported feature. On these grounds we might reasonably assume, for example, that the elimination of the redundant feature of rounding both in  $\phi y_{42}$  and in  $\bar{y}_{51\ 52}$  occurred in close conjunction.

There is no apparent structural basis for ordering the changes in col. 6 with respect to any of the others. We can only assume that the emergence of  $\bar{a}_{34}$  was a response to the gap left by the raising of Proto-Yiddish  $\bar{a}_{12\ 13}$  to  $[\bar{o}]$ . But whether or not we accept Joffe's contention (1954:121) that vowel 13 remained  $[\bar{a}]$  long after  $\bar{a}_{12}$  had become  $[\bar{o}]$  (cf. Chap 5, fn. 5), it is reasonable to assume that the fronting of 51, 52 (col. 2) preceded the monophthongization of 34 (col. 6).

Column 6 represents yet another weakness in the system of intra-structural relations. Wherever  $\bar{a}_{34}$ ,  $\underline{aj}_{22}$  and  $\underline{ej}_{25}$  co-occur, the changes in column 6 must have occurred in the prescribed order. Yet we have found (in Jádeve and Véngréve) that  $\bar{a}_{34}$  and  $\underline{ej}_{25}$  co-occur without an intervening  $\underline{aj}_{22}$  (cf. Sedlec and SEY  $\bar{a}_{34}$ ,  $\underline{ej}_{22\ 22}$ ). Whether or not the emergence of  $\underline{ej}_{25}$  was, in the first place, dependent upon the lowering of 22 to  $[aj]$ , its diffusion into other areas

was apparently not precluded. Once it merged with  $\underline{ej}_{22}$  in the interstitial area the merger was free to move in every direction, restricted only by the NEY merger of 22 and 42 (cf. Fig. 5:94). Thus it may have caused the replacement of  $\underline{aj}_{22}$  by [ej] again wherever [aj] is lacking from the series  $\bar{a}_{34}$ ,  $\underline{aj}_{22}$ ,  $\underline{ej}_{25}$ .

When we turn our attention to the derivation of NEY from P(N)EY we find that the only chronological implications that are possible (cf. Table 14) concern the emergence of minor sub-types of NEY (distinguished by differences in the quality of vowel 54: au/ou/u/oj).

TABLE 14

## DERIVATION OF NEY &lt; P(N)EY

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
$\phi y_{42} > ej$	Loss of Length	$au_{54} > ou$
		$ou_{54} > u/oj$

We may assume that the loss of length which is universal in NEY occurred prior to the other regional changes depicted in Table 14. We still encounter pockets of  $\phi y_{42}$ ,  $\underline{au}_{54}$ , and  $\underline{ou}_{54}$ . Evidence of the priority of  $\underline{u}_{54}$  over [oj] was provided by our family of informants from Ostrelenke (cf. §5.14.32).

In §5.15.2 we described the results of the confrontation of SY and NEY in the interstitial area. We will now attempt to determine at what stage in the development of each system this confrontation took



place. If we accept  $\underline{y}_{51\ 52}$  in Brajnsk as the survival of an earlier stage, we may assume that contact took place after the fronting of 51, 52 but before their subsequent unrounding. Unrounding, moving eastward in the wake of fronting, reached its limits to the west of Brajnsk. As we noted earlier,  $\underline{y}_{42}$  was probably unrounded to [oj] when  $\underline{\bar{y}}_{51\ 52} > [\bar{i}]$ . The eastern limit of  $\underline{oj}_{42}$  is coincident with that of  $\underline{i}_{51\ 52}$ .

If we assume that the unrounding of 51, 52 moved eastward after contact, and that  $\underline{\bar{u}}_{12}$  ( $< \underline{\bar{o}}$ ) did likewise (for the two isoglosses coincide except at Ostrelenke where special conditions prevail; cf. §5.15.2), we must also agree that length had not yet been eliminated in the northeast. Otherwise the raising of vowel 12 would have embroiled  $\underline{\bar{o}}_{41}$  as well. But the wave of length elimination must have reached the area soon thereafter in order to have prevented the eastward diffusion of  $\underline{\bar{a}}_{34}$  ( $< \underline{aj}$ ),  $\underline{\bar{o}}_{54}$  ( $< \underline{ou}$ ), and  $\underline{\bar{u}}_{12}$  ( $< \underline{\bar{u}}$ ). The lowering of  $\underline{ej}_{22}$  ( $> \underline{aj}$ ) and the diphthongization of  $\underline{\bar{e}}_{25}$  ( $> \underline{ej}$ ) could then have followed the first monophthongization.

What was the status of vowel 54 at the time of contact? Probably [ou] in the west and [au] in the east. NEY  $\underline{au}_{54}$  would then seem to have undergone a gradual closure to [ou] which, in turn, was half-fronted to [oj]. Considerable variation between [au], [ou], and [oj] is still in evidence. Structural factors in the development of vowel 54 apparently came into play only after  $\underline{ou}_{54}$  was more widespread.

One of these factors may have been the NEY loss of the length feature; another, the velar and vocal qualities of  $\underline{l}$  (cf. §5.14.33). Other consonantal variation also entailed a change in the vowel system: phonemic contrasts in the unstressed vowels (Fig. 5:108) reflect the

loss of r (cf. Fig. 5:107).

We will also recall the sporadic lexical manifestation of what must previously have been regular regional consonantal variation; thus light/lign 'a lie' (§5.24), farplontert/farplontet 'tangled' (§5.23). If such variation were predictable it would be no more significant than differences in the lexical distribution of phonemes. Since it is not predictable, we consider it an example of the effects of change in one aspect of the structure upon variation in another.

Changes in the grammatical system have also been inferred from phonological change: new plural formations to compensate for the homonymy created by the CY merger of 51, 52 with 31, 32 (§5.12.211), and by the NEY merger of 42 with 22 (§5.14.21); elimination of the imminutive in CY (§4.3) as a consequence of interconsonantal epenthesis (cf. §5.28). We have also proposed (Chap. 4, fn. 6) that the origin of the merger of dative and accusative in the first and second person singular pronouns might be sought in the quality of r in the east. Regressive assimilation of voicing features (cf. §5.22) which leads to the frequent neutralization of the voiced velar fricative r and its voiceless counterpart x, a distinction crucial to the differentiation of dative mir 'me' from accusative mix, may have acted as a stimulus to its elimination.

7.32.2 Grammar. Grammatical changes have had repercussions upon the lexicon. Usually, as in the regionally varied plurals of nouns, the variation itself is the effect we are looking for. At least in one case, however, we found a more complex chain of events: the emergence of the form rejdl 'Hannukah top', presumably from drejdl (§3.11.3, Fig. 3:13), as a result of gender change (cf. rod 'wheel', Fig. 4:10).

More significant are the effects of change in one part of the grammar upon others. We observed the connection between a change in the case system and the emergence of a new (intermediate) gender category (cf. Chap. 4, fns. 4, 8) and its probable relationship to the loss of the neuter in NEY and the emergence of new masculine forms in the transition area (cf. §4.11.3, 4.12.1). The loss of the neuter also gave rise to a new (mass) gender category (§4.11.11) which, in turn, led to semantically motivated gender changes in the contact area (§4.12.3).

7.32.3 Conclusions. The significance of the findings summarized above can only be properly evaluated in the light of the assumptions with which we approached our data in the first place. Of particular importance is the fact that, contrary to the requirements of structuralism in its strictest interpretation, we did not presuppose, as a matter of dogma, that we were dealing with whole systems--whether the systems be different levels of the language considered separately, or the language in its totality. To have done so would have required that we sacrifice the concept of the transition dialect. It is evident that the very nature of our data, irreconcilable with the concept of closed systems, compelled us to do otherwise.

Yet our findings do not weaken the case for structuralism. On the contrary; if, despite our approach, there prove to be so many instances of intra-structural relations among the innovations--both the obvious entailment and the logical implication of one change by another--this is perhaps the strongest argument for the efficacy of structure. For we cannot go convincingly beyond the assertion that,

while the structure of a language plays a major role in determining the changes that occur, this role is not always a decisive one.

### 7.33 Limits of Structural Interpretation

7.33.1 Lexicon. In anticipation of the following discussion we observed (§3.01) that, in the case of lexical materials, the consistent application of U. Weinreich's " 'structural corrective' to a traditional dialect map" (1954a:399) could only have been accomplished at a considerable sacrifice of clarity. We have found that in all but the simplest cases, superimposing the maps of an implication chain failed to reveal consistent regional correlations of the expected type. Ideally we would hope to find that a variety of lexical designations for a particular referent were geographically in complementary distribution. Similarly, if a single lexical item should have several referents, we would hope the latter to be regionally complementary as well.

The stated conditions are rarely satisfied. They are at best approximated when we superimpose the data previously cited in Figs. 3:6, 3:8. We find (Fig. 7:1) that while kamer is universal, it designates a '(bed)room' to the east of Isogloss 2 and a 'store-room' to the west of it. On the other hand, alker designates a '(bed)room' to the west of Isogloss 1 and is unknown to the east of it. In the interstitial area the two function as synonyms.

The relative consistency of this picture is difficult to duplicate if we go beyond the simplest instances. In Figs. 7:2-7:5 we have illustrated a major portion of the "implicational chain" that results from the question "What did you call a paper bag?" Each map in turn implies the one that follows. We note in Fig. 7:2 that tórbele and bájtele, the





FIG. 7:2 'paper bag'

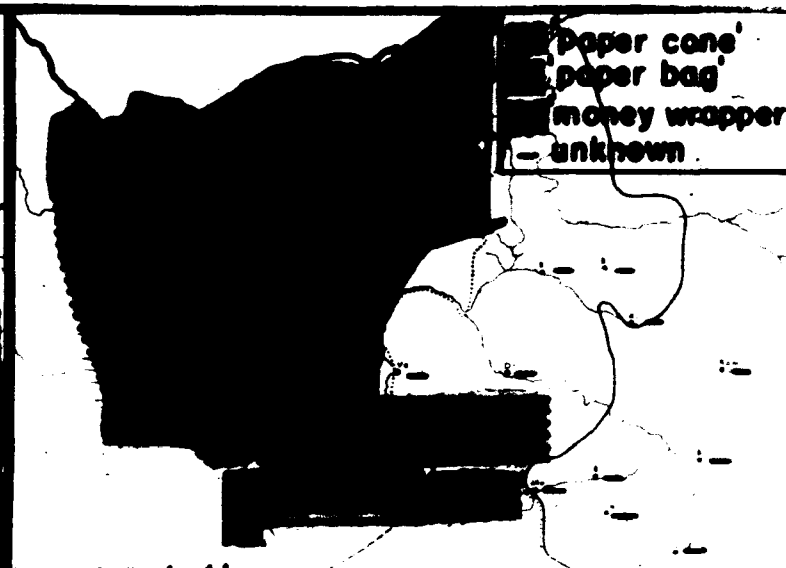


FIG. 7:3 tutl

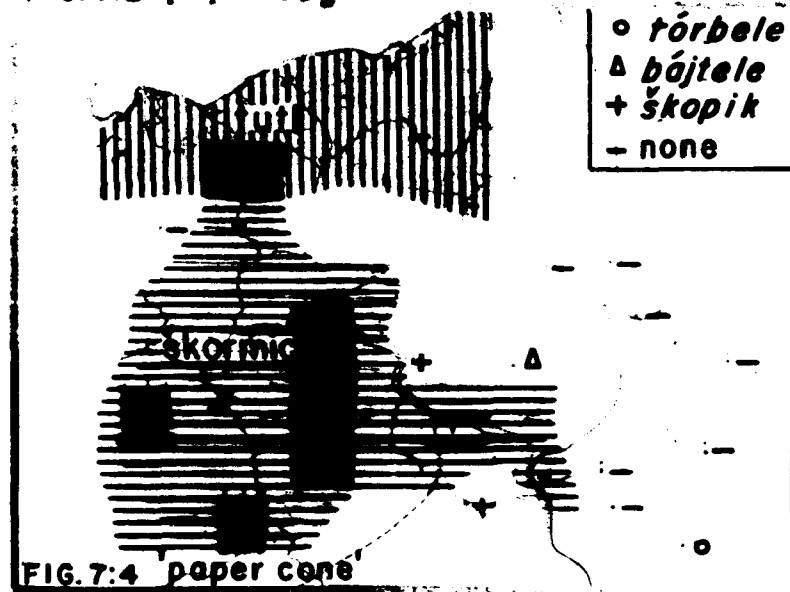


FIG. 7:4 'paper cone'

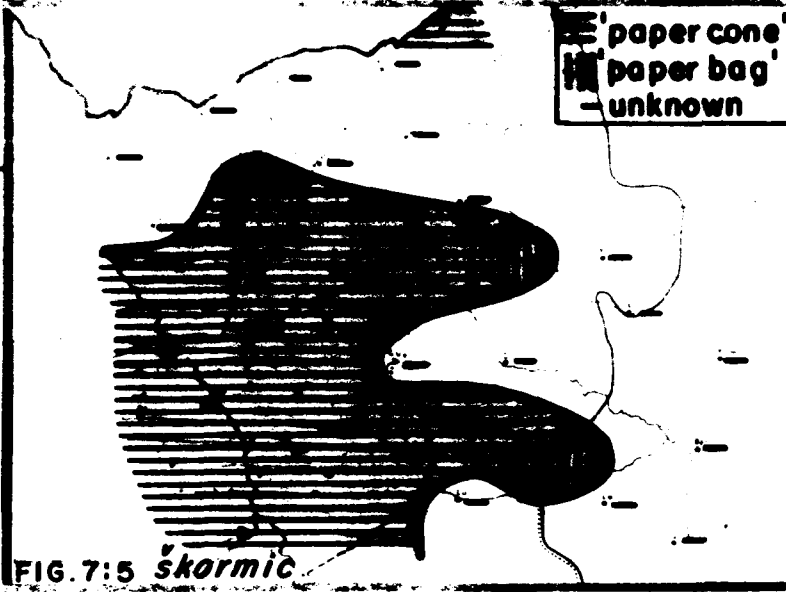


FIG. 7:5 škormic

major designations for 'paper bag' in response to the initial query, are nearly mutually exclusive. However, when we add the relevant information concerning 'paper bag' that emerges from the subsequent queries it is evident that the complexity of the picture increases (Fig. 7:6).

If we next consider only the occurrence of the forms tut(1) (Fig. 7:3) and škormic (Fig. 7:4) we find that the area of the latter is almost entirely included in that of the former (Fig. 7:7). Where the two co-occur, however, there is little semblance of complementarity in the distribution of their meanings (Fig. 7:8). It would be too difficult to draw a composite of Figs. 7:6 and Figs. 7:8 but it is apparent that the fragmentation that would result from an attempt to relate the "lexical systems" shown separately on each map (however these are defined) would defy significant structural interpretation. Perhaps the high degree of polysemy and synonymy that characterizes a transition area makes it unproductive to attempt a definition of lexical systems in structural terms.

7.33.2 Phonology. Our classification of Yiddish dialects (cf. §5.51.2) is not in strict conformity with a consistent structuralist approach, either. Stankiewicz, for example, requires (1957:45) that "the classification of dialects on the basis of their phonemic inventories should be considered the first step in an exhaustive description of linguistic areas". While the phonemic principle was implicit in our phonological descriptions (cf. Chap. 5, fn. 6), we have made classification in terms of phonemic inventories the last rather than the first step in our description. Moulton (1960) has demonstrated how empty can be the results



FIG. 7:6



FIG. 7:7

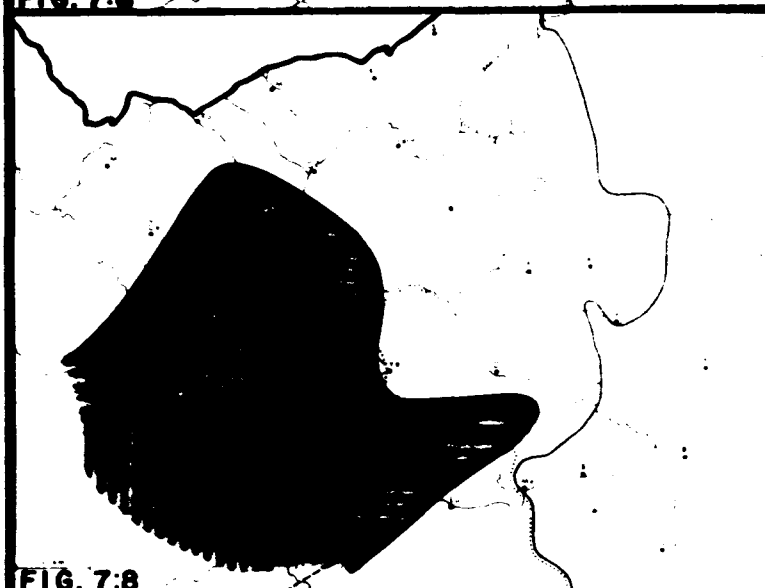


FIG. 7:8

FIG. 7:6

'paper bag'

≡ *bájtele*

|||| *tutl*

/// *škormic*

/// *zékele*

●●● *tórbele*

FIG. 7:7

Occurrence  
of:

|||| *tutl*

|||| *škormic*

FIG. 7:8

≡ *tutl* = *škormic*  
'paper bag'

|||| *tutl* = *škormic*  
'paper cone'

Δ *tutl* 'paper bag'

●●● *tutl* 'money wrapper'

≠ *škormic* 'paper cone'



of classification based on Stankiewicz's principle: "If we disregard lexical correspondences then we are treating these varieties as if they were totally unrelated to one another" (op. cit.:176). Would we venture to consider the comparison of unrelated languages an essential part of dialect study? Perhaps only if our object were to satisfy Trubetskoy's "order of the day".<sup>4</sup> Though we cannot minimize the importance of this objective, our own, more limited goal was the description of regionalization in a particular language and the inferences that could be drawn from the data concerning both the internal and external history of that language.

In choosing to follow this course, we bore in mind Ivić's recent conclusion (1962:49f.) that "it is dangerous to insist that any structural difference automatically is more important than any non-structural. . . . [though it] belongs to a higher level of phenomena". Ivić (op. cit.:51) seeks a "pertinent place" in structural dialectology for "processes such as the circular movement in the vowel pattern of the Serbocroatian dialect of Bednja, where /a/ > /o/, /o/ > /e/ and /e/ > /a/, ...". Inevitably he concludes that "similarities and differences in substance [are] the basic point of departure for the study of dialectal differentiation" (ibid.).

As we have seen, the "circular movement" in the vowel patterns of Yiddish dialects is no less striking, and, while phonemic structures are easily inferred from the data presented in their diachronic aspect,

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<sup>4</sup>Une description comparative des langues du monde au point de vue de la géographie phonologique est maintenant à l'ordre du jour. Mais cela suppose décrite la phonologie dialectale des diverses langues" (Trubetskoy 1931:350).

the diachronic facts are irretrievable from a synchronic classification alone. The phonemic concept, unsurpassed as a device for the proper ordering of phonetic details in a homogeneous sample of speech, is of little use either in tracing the process of dialect differentiation or in describing the reality of dialect relationships. These two tasks are, in reality, only one, for our ability to posit a genetic relationship among languages (or dialects) is ultimately a function of our ability to trace the processes of language change. The dynamics of these processes are revealed only when the data are studied in their diachronic aspect. We will observe below (§7.33.3) that a purely structural classification of Yiddish dialects, i.e. in terms of their phonemic inventories, only obscures the dynamics of inter-dialectal relationships. It might be worth putting to the test a hypothesis that this situation is peculiar to languages like Yiddish (and Serbocroatian) where the degree of phonological divergence among the dialects requires that most phonemic contrasts in different areas be established on the basis of different word pairs.

7.33.3 Structural Classification of Yiddish Dialects. When we group communities in terms of their stressed vowel phonemes, our interpretation of the prevailing contrasts will determine the number of groups that emerge--eight if we consider that the contrasts between /ɔ/ and /o/ in Jádevé is distinct from the contrast between /o/ and /ou/ in Véngreve, seven if we decide to equate the two (Fig. 7:9). Regardless of how we interpret [ou] elsewhere (or [ej] anywhere), it will make no difference

to our classification. The eight groups are defined in Table 15.<sup>5</sup>

We note that the groupings described here differ from those defined earlier (cf. Fig. 5:99 and Tables 11-12) not only because distributional differences have now been left out of account, but also because a stricter phonemicization has been employed, i.e. historical factors have been disregarded and, for example, the functional load of particular contrasts has been left out of account. As a result, we find that Šedlec is no longer a separate variety, for despite the rarity of aj<sub>34</sub>, lexical innovations from the east permit such contrasts as vajn 'wine' vs. man 'man'. We consider also that the communities constituting group 1 (Fig. 7:9) merit separate classification, since ou<sub>64</sub>, almost completely replaced by [ō], may nevertheless contrast with it in analogical environments.

The present classification, however, will permit very few inferences concerning the historical relationship between the different groups, and none about the direction of the changes that distinguish them or the order in which the changes occurred. On the other hand, this classification falsely implies the homogeneity of the varieties classified together, particularly in B and C.

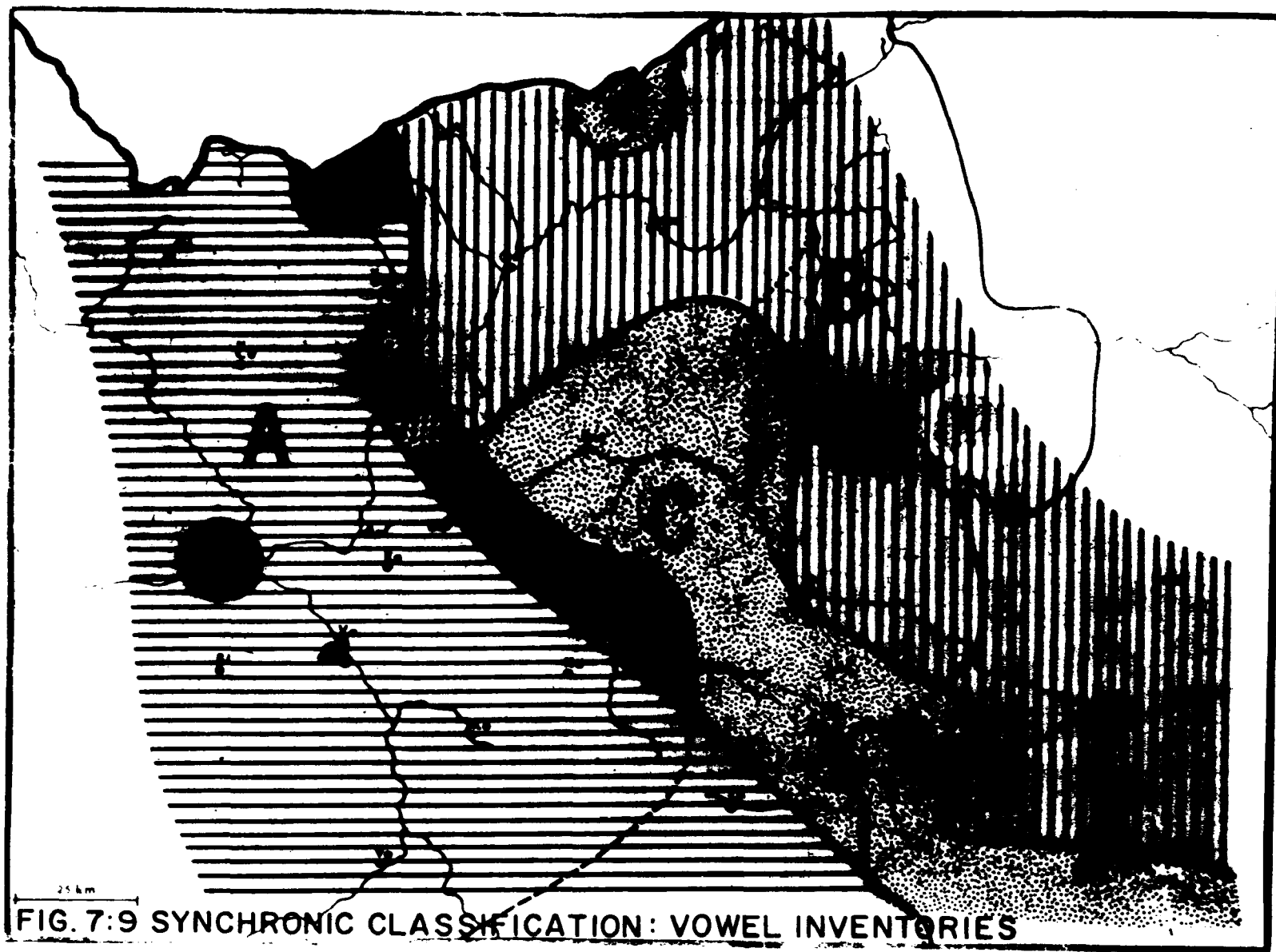
The imposition of diachronic isoglosses (from Fig. 5:99) upon Fig. 7:9 yields Fig. 7:10. Here we observe that C has been subdivided and that two new varieties 8 (Jáblenke, kol'ne), and 6 (Šedlec), have

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<sup>5</sup>In Table 15 we have identified only the communities encompassed by the numbered groups in Fig. 7:9. The number of communities designated A, B, and C is too great to be specified here. The text will soon make apparent the relationship of numbered and lettered groups to one another, and of all, to the more conventional designations CY, NCY, and NEY.

TABLE 15  
INVENTORIES OF STRESSED VOWEL PHONEMES

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>A</u></p> <p>ĩ    ī            ů    ū</p> <p>e                    ǫ    ȯ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ǻ    ā</p> <p>ej        aj        oj</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>4. (Véngreve)</u></p> <p>i                    ů    ū</p> <p>e                    o</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ǻ    ā</p> <p>ej                    oj ou</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>1. (Xoržl, Zakrečín)</u></p> <p>ĩ    ī            ů    ū</p> <p>e                    ǫ    ȯ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ǻ    ā</p> <p>ej    aj        oj    ou</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>B</u></p> <p>i                    u</p> <p>e                    o</p> <p style="text-align: center;">a</p> <p>ej    aj        oj</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>2. (Mákeve)</u></p> <p>i                    u</p> <p>e                    ǫ    ȯ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ǻ    ā</p> <p>ej        aj        oj</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>5. (Brajnsk)</u></p> <p>i                    y</p> <p>e                    o</p> <p style="text-align: center;">a</p> <p>ej    aj        oj</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>3. (Jádeve)</u></p> <p>i                    ů    ū</p> <p>e                    ǫ    ȯ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ǻ    ā</p> <p>ej                    oj</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>C</u></p> <p>i                    u</p> <p>e                    o</p> <p style="text-align: center;">a</p> <p>ej    aj        oj    ou</p>





emerged from it. Similarly, the subdivision of B has yielded a new group, D, and a new variety, 7 (Ostrelenke).<sup>6</sup>

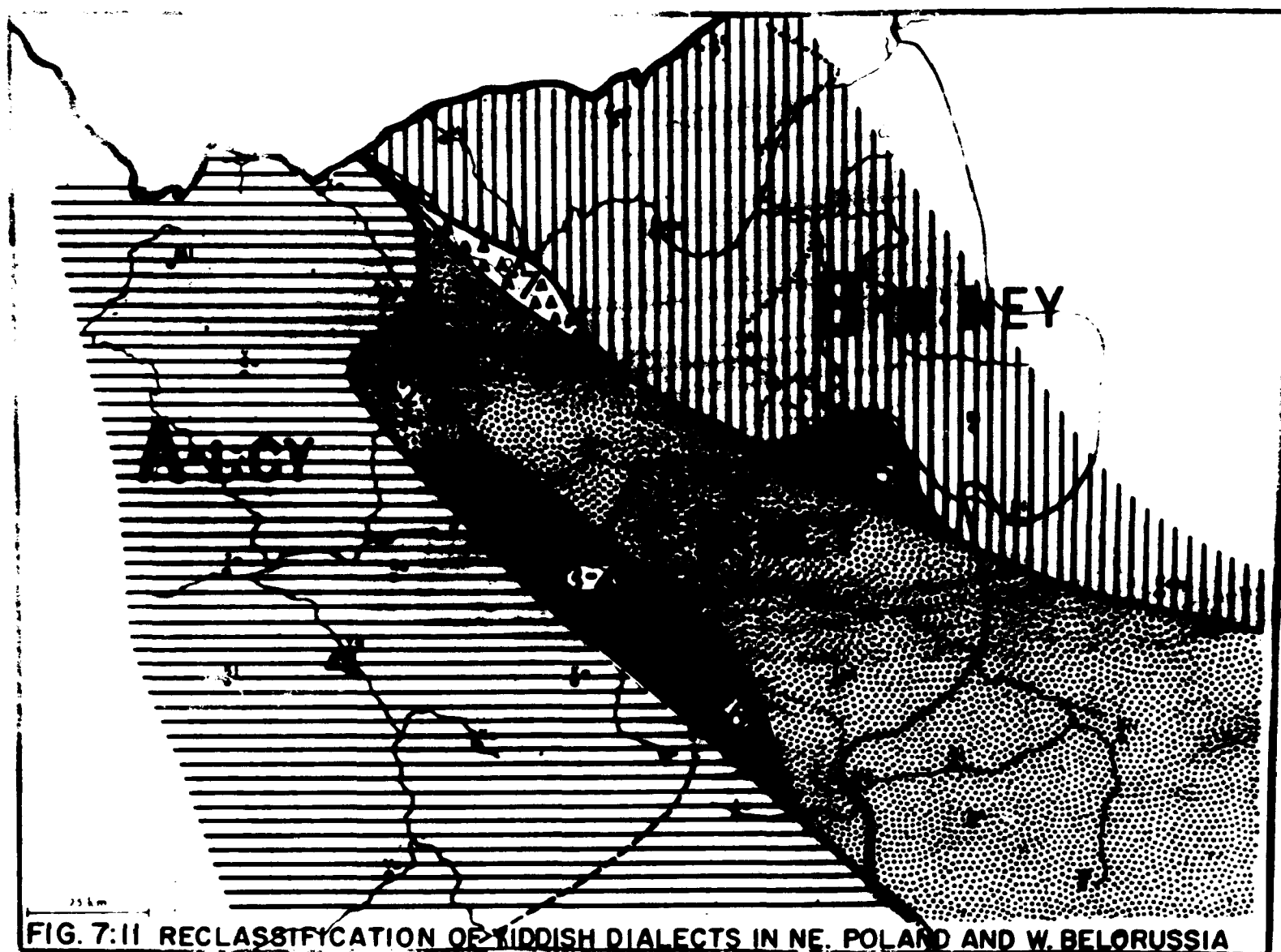
We now find that the same feature distinguishes 1 from A, 4 from 3, 8 from B, and C from D--ou<sub>54</sub> occurs only in the first of each pair. Uniquely, [ou] is the only vowel of monogenetic origin that overlaps all the different structural and distributional types and its historically recessive character is apparent everywhere. Its recessiveness is further emphasized by diachronic evidence in the synchronic record, as it were (cf. §5.14.33).

On these grounds, and in order to simplify our classification, we disregard areal divisions that depend only on the presence or absence of [ou]. Thus we arrive at our original classification. In Fig. 7:11, A, consisting of A and 1, is CY; B, consisting of B and 8, is NEY; and C, consisting of C and D, is NCY. Mákeve (2), Jádeve-Véngreve (3-4), Sedlec (6), Brajnsk (5), and Ostrelenke (7), remain apart.

In terms of phonemic inventories, D was allied with B. When distributional facts were considered, it became part of C. The two communities (Kol'ne and Jáblenke) which constituted 8 emerged from C and are now part of B. While classification by phonemic inventories allied B and C in opposition to A (i.e. NEY and NCY vs. CY), the distributional facts required that A and C be grouped together in contrast to B (CY and NCY vs. NEY). We need not hesitate to choose the latter view as the more relevant to the goals of our investigation.

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<sup>6</sup>The change in the shape of C in the northwest (cf. Figs. 7:9, 7:10), perhaps somewhat puzzling at first glance, results simply from the inclusion of diachronic isoglosses that represent the features differentiating 7(Ostrelenke) from B--i<sub>51 52</sub>, o<sub>j 42</sub>, and u<sub>54</sub>.





In a study of Polish nasalization, some years ago, Friedrich stated (1937:190):

After citing our entire material, it is hardly necessary to prove that the conception of a language as a 'system' of stable phonemes is a lifeless and hardly useful fiction.

The results of our own study now illuminate further the weakness of a purely synchronic, structural approach to language as a closed, homogeneous entity.

## APPENDIX I

## INDEX OF INFORMANTS

Location <sup>1</sup>	Informant	Res. <sup>2</sup>	B <sup>3</sup>	E <sup>4</sup>	Occup. <sup>5</sup>	OL <sup>6</sup>
Bi	Mr. Y.K.	J	1915	1935	gov't	HPRG(E)
Bj	Mr. S.F.	J	1911	1935	merch.	HPG
Bl	Mr. E.P.	J	1925	1948	diam. cutt.	HPRG
Br	Mrs. M.S.	PT	1887	1934	hw	-
Bri	Miss S.V.	NYC	?	1940	steno.	HPRE
Bro	Mrs. Kh.S.B.	J	1919	1949	hw	HPG
Ce	Mr. A.M.	J	1902	1948	mnfg.	P(R)
Dr	Mrs. M.A.	J	1912	1931	teacher	HP(GE)
Ja	Mrs. H. Sh.	J	1903	1925	hw	HPR(A)
Jad	Mr. A. P.	TA	1891	1932	merch.	HP(R)G
Ka	Mr. H.E.K.	TA	1907	1933	Rabb. court	HP
	Mrs. R.K.	TA	1907	1937	hw	HP
Kam	Mrs. S.V.	NYC	1908	1930	hw	HPRGE
Kl	Mrs. S.B.	TA	1905	1932	hw	HPRG
Ko	Mrs. L	TA	?	?	hw	HP(?)

<sup>1</sup> Cf. key to Fig. O:1<sup>2</sup> Residence: J=Jerusalem; PT=Petah Tikvah; TA=Tel Aviv; NYC=New York City<sup>3</sup> B=Birthdate<sup>4</sup> E=Date of emigration<sup>5</sup> Occupation: hw=housewife<sup>6</sup> OL=knowledge of languages other than Yiddish: H=Hebrew; P=Polish; R=Russian; G=German; A=Arabic; E=English; F=French; ( )=slight

Location <sup>1</sup>	Informant	Res. <sup>2</sup>	B <sup>3</sup>	E <sup>4</sup>	Occup. <sup>5</sup>	OL <sup>6</sup>
Kol	Mrs. S.Sh.	J	1910	1935	hw	HPG
Lo	Mrs. E.L.	J	1912	1936	hw	(P)
Lom	Mr. Y.F.	J	1911	1946	painter	HPRG
Loš	Mr. Y.B.	J	1909	1949	hosp. emp.	HP(R)
Lu	Mrs. M.U.	J	1907	1949	hw	HPRG
Ma	Mr. Y.R.	J	1916	1945	hosp. emp.	HP
Me	Mrs. G.S.	J	1912	1956	clerical	HPRG
Mi	Mrs. Kh.M.G.	TA	1902	1933	hw	HPG
MI	Mr. Sh. D	NYC	1895	1941	editor	P(R)E
Os	Mrs. E. Kh.	J	1888	1949	hw	P(R)
	Mr. P. Kh.	J	1886	1949	carp.	(H)P(R)
	Mr. M. Kh.	J	1925	1949	carp.	HP(R)
Ra	Mr. A.S.	J	1898	1920	admin.	HPRG
Se	Mr. Y.Z.	J	1904	1928	turner	H(PGE)
Si	Mrs. R. Dzh.	NYC	1891	1927	hw	P(E)
Sl	Mrs. R.F.	J	1909	1935	hw	-
St	Mrs. H.K.	NYC	1915	1946	steno.	(H)P(G)E
Va	Mr. M. Zh.	J	1901	1932	gov't	HPRG(E)
Ve	Mrs. B.Y.K.	J	1912	1934	admin.	HP(EF)
Vo	Mr. Y.S.U.	J	1907	1949	lithog.	HP(RG)
Xo	Mrs. M.V.	J	1889	1935	hw	(H)PRG
Za	Mr. M.K.	J	1910	1947	police	HPR

## APPENDIX II

### INDEX OF PLACE-NAMES<sup>1</sup>

Yiddish toponymics, a field in which many problems remain unresolved, can provide the linguist with valuable insights into the comparative structures of Yiddish and its coterritorial languages, as well as into the relative chronology of change in both. In the former category belong such phenomena as the reinterpretation of unfamiliar consonant clusters, the reduction of vowels in unstressed position, stress shifts, etc; in the latter, the rendition of Polish ś, rz, ó (= [u]), etc.

The following pages contain an alphabetical listing of the Yiddish place-names that have occurred both in the text and on our maps, each with its corresponding Polish name. While there is no doubt of the correspondence in the vast majority of cases, a number of errors are bound to have occurred in matching the "towns recalled" by our informants (Fig. 2:33) with their Polish equivalents. Such errors are due in large measure to the geographic proximity of many towns and villages bearing names that differ only slightly from one another. Ultimately, it may be desirable to submit our selection, in doubtful cases, to verification by our informants.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, stress in Yiddish place-names is penultimate. All Polish place-names receive penultimate stress. The designation ó (= [u]) in Polish words is an orthographic convention and not an indication of stress.

<u>Yiddish</u>	<u>Polish</u>	<u>Yiddish</u>	<u>Polish</u>
Aleksander	Aleksandrów	Díleve	Dylewo
Amdur	Indura	Dobre	Dobry
Ámšenev	Mszczonów	Drobnín	Drobnin
Apt	Opatów	Drohečín	Drohiczyn
Bárneve	Baranowa	Drónževe	Drażdźewo
Bilsk	Bielsk	Gajnefke	Gajnowka
Bezajn	Bieżuń	Ger	Góra- Kalwarja
Bjale (Grójs-Bjale)	Biała Podlaska	Glóvečev	Głowaczów
Bjá(ł)e(stok	Białystok	Góverove	Goworowo
Bjá(ł)eveš	Białowieża	Grábeve	Grabowo
Blojne	Błonie	Gráj(e)ve	Grajewo
Botke	Bocki	Grice	Grójec
Brajnsk	Brańsk	Grodžesk	Grodzisk
Brisk(-de-Lite)	Brześć-Litewski (Eng. Brest- Litovsk)	Grodne	Grodno
Brisk(-de-Ki)	Brześć-Kujawski	Jablone	Jabłonna
Brok	Brok	Jáblenke	Jabłonka
Bžálebžek	Białobrzegi	Jádeve	Jadów
Čersk	Czersk	Jágestov	Augustów
Červínsk	Czerwińsk	Jáneve	Janów
Červone	Czerwony	Jedvabne	Jedwabno
Čéxenovce	Ciechanowiec	Kádzedle	Kadziła
Čéxenove	Ciechanów	Kalešín	Kałużyn
Čiževe	Czyżew	Kámenec- Litóvsk	Kamieniec- Litewski

<u>Yiddish</u>	<u>Polish</u>	<u>Yiddish</u>	<u>Polish</u>
Kiev	Kiev (Rus.)	Mákeve	Maków
Klešćél	Kleszczele	Malkín	Malkiń Górna
Kobrín	Kobryń	Markes	Marki
Kock	Kock	Mazovje	Mazowsze Eng. Mazovia
Kodne	Kodeń	Melejčes	Meleiczie
Kólebjel	Kolbiel	Mezrič	Międzyrzecz
Koleš [kūwaš]	Kalisz	Mežbež	Międzybóž
Kol'ne	Kolno	Minsk	Mińsk Mazowiecki
Kóženec	Kozienice	Mjelnik	Mielnik
Kroke [krukə]	Kraków Eng. Cracow	Mišnec	Myszyniec
Kúznece	Kusznica	Mizrič	Mizirič (Rus.)
Látevič	Latowicz	Mlave	Mława
Lešne	Leszno	Mólese	Młosna
Ležénsk	Leżajsk	Nadežín	Nadarzyn
Lojck	Luck	Najštót [na(n)štüt]	Nowe Miasto
Lojvič	Łowicz	Našélsk	Nasielsk
Lomás	Lomazy	Nóvedvor	Nowy Dwór
Lomze	Lomża	Nóvegrod	Nowogród
Lóšec	Łosica	Orle	Orla
Loxev	Łochów	Ostrelenke	Ostrolęka
Lublin	Lublin	Óstreve	Ostrów Mazowiecka
Ludmir	Włodzimierz	Otfóck	Otwock
Lukove [lúkəve]	Luków	Párcev	Parczew
Mágnešev	Magnuszew	Pečáč	Pęcice

<u>Yiddish</u>	<u>Polish</u>	<u>Yiddish</u>	<u>Polish</u>
Pinsk	Pińsk	Šilc	Krasnosielc
Pjasečne	Piasieczno	Skérnevec	Skierniewice
Pjóntnice	Piątnica	Šnádevc	Sniadowo
Plinsk	Płońsk	Slávetič	Sławatycze
Plock	Płock	Sekólc	Sokoła
Podlaše	Podlasie	Sókelove	Sokołów
Pónexev	Pomiechowo	Sóxečev	Podlaski Sochaczew
Prušnec [prušnec]	Przasnysz	Srock	Serock
Prūzene	Prużany	Stavesk	Stawiski
Pšiše	Pszysucha	Stock	Stoczek
Pultúsk [plútsk]	Pułtusk	Stok	Stok
Radžileve	Radziłów	Stučín	Szczuczyn
Radzimín	Radzymin	Suraz	Suraz
Radzín	Radzyn	Tiktín	Tykocin
Rave	Rawa	Torne [turne]	Tarnów
Režán	Rózan	Tristín	Troszyn
Resóš	Rossosz	Trok	Troki
Rodem [rūdēm]	Radom	Varše	Warszawa Eng. Warsaw
Rutke	Rutki	Véngreve	Węgrów
Sádevne	Sadowna	Vilne	Wilno Eng. Vilna
Senake	Sarnaki	Víšegrod	Wyszogród
Sčégeve	Dzierzgowa	Visk	Wisk
Šedlec	Siedlce	Víškeve	Wyszków
Šemjatič	Siemiatycz	Višnec	Wisznice
Šenec	Siennica	Visóke-Litóvsk	Wysoko- Litewski
Šeps	Sierpc	Visóke- Mazovjeck	Wysoko- Mazowieckie

<u>Yiddish</u>	<u>Polish</u>	<u>Yiddish</u>	<u>Polish</u>
Vizne	Wizna	<u>RIVERS</u>	
Vlódeve	Włodawa	Bug [bik]	Bug
Vohin	Wohin	Livjec	Liwiec
Volomín	Wołomin	Narev	Narew
Vonseš	Wonsosz	Nurec	Nurzec
Vorke [vurkə]	Warka	Ómelev	Omulew
Xelem	Chel̩m	Oržec	Orzyc
Xmel'nik	Chmielnik	Pílece	Pilica
Xoržl	Chorzele	Vajsl [vāsl]	Wisła
Žábenke	Żabinka		Eng. Vistula
Zablúdeve	Zabludów		
Zakrečín	Zakroczym		
Zambrev	Zambrowo		
Žélexev	Żelechów		
Zaremb	Zaręby		
Zémbreve	Zembrów		
Zoremín	Zuromin		



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